THE MAD MONK OF RUSSIA

ILIODOR

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THE MAD MONK OF RUSSIA
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Sergius M. Trufanoff

THE MAD MONK OF RUSSIA
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LIFE, MEMOIRS, AND CONFESSIONS OF
SERGEI MICHAILOVICH TRUFANOFF
(ILIODOR)

ILLUSTRATED WITH
PHOTOGRAPHS

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WARNER GIFT
VIARDI

TO
MY GOOD FRIEND
THE ADMIRABLE
HERBERT BRENON
MOTION-PICTURE ARTIST
AND POET

FOREWORD

EVERYTHING that I write in this book I have seen and heard myself. What I have seen and heard I could not write before my arrival in this great and free country, the United States; and even here until the last few months, owing to a combination of inauspicious circumstances and political reasons, I have not been able to publish anything relating to the former Russian court and the causes which brought about the Russian Revolution. In consequence, my revelations in their complete form have never before seen the light.

The English language press in this country has swarmed with articles on Russia and Russian court life emanating from people who had seen virtually nothing of it, and whose authenticity cannot be depended upon. They never saw the czar; they never saw Rasputin as he really was. The mutilation and distortion of my story has been a source of great sorrow to me, and I have asked myself a dozen times a day, "Is it possible that I, the most intimate friend Rasputin ever had, will have no opportunity to have my say?" There was a time when I lost all hope and decided to return to Russia. Then I met Felix de Thielé, who, moved only by altruistic motives,

smoothed my path for me, with the result that, as I hope, my revelations will be spread through the United States and the whole world. For the disinterested services which Felix de Thielé has rendered in this work I wish to express my deepest gratitude and appreciation.

Is it necessary for me to convince you, my esteemed American readers, that what I have to tell deserves your attention? Let the facts speak for themselves —the facts which I shall narrate to you exactly as they have occurred during the course of my life. These facts are as uncommon as your gigantic skyscrapers, the towers of which, it seems, are about to reach the sky and the stars.

I know you have heard many wild rumors and strange legends about me. More than one fantastic story has been circulated here about the "Mad Monk" of the legendary land of the czars, about Iliodor, a name that has probably called forth in this country a feeling of dread and astonishment, just as it did among certain classes of the Russian population.

You have heard of the fiery reactionary speeches of the monk, you have heard that he traveled from one end of Russia to the other, sowing hatred in his wake and kindling the people's wrath. You have been informed that Father Iliodor was the dark shadow of Russia, the czar's evil genius, and one of the chief crusaders against those who strove for freedom in Russia. I believe you have also formed

some idea of the wild terror which the name of Monk Iliodor inspired in the Jewish population of Russia.

Later, many of you heard how this same "Mad Monk" waged war against the Holy Synod, against the reactionists, and against all those who oppressed and tortured the poor. A legend reached you of a young man whom thousands followed blindly, who traversed on foot the whole of Russia, preaching, appealing, arousing, and terrorizing those whom he had formerly aided in extinguishing the light from Russia. You heard how the Monk Iliodor withstood a formal siege in his monastery at Tsaritzin for twenty days running, and finally emerged victorious over the Holy Synod and the entire Russian ruling clique. Still later you heard that I had escaped from Russia, and that high Russian government officials had been sent abroad to negotiate with me regarding a proposed attempt on Rasputin's life. Intimations have also reached you concerning the scandalous secrets of the czar's court which were in my possession and of which attempts were repeatedly made to deprive me.

Now I come to you with my confessions. I wish to introduce myself to you. I wish to tell you who I am, whence I come, how I lived in my native country, what part I played there once upon a time, what I am now, and how the change in me has taken place.

Yes, I was once one of the mainstays of Russia's reactionists. The reactionists introduced me to

society, placed me on terms of friendship with counts, princes, and other dignitaries, and helped me to gain the czar's esteem. They considered me a great man. They revealed their secrets to me. I was their adviser, and I shielded their dastardly deeds.

Later, a complete change came over me. This change also I wish to relate. I wish to tell the whole story of my participation in the historical events of contemporary Russia. I shall endeavor to tell the truth, and nothing but the truth, about myself. Naturally enough, it may happen that I tell you more good than evil about myself. Do not, however, impute this to me as a sin. Be certain that all the evil about myself which I withhold will be exposed by my "friends." A great many such "friends" I have in Russia. As a rule, I bless them, because they teach me modesty, exposing before the judgment of mankind that which my own human weakness would compel me to conceal. But now I owe them still another favor: it is thanks to them that I have beheld America.

I hope to make it clear in this book that the darkness of Russia's condition and the reign of the Romanoffs were alike outgrowths of the peculiar mysticism of the Russian people. From the seeds of this mysticism grew up in the shadow of the Russian Court two forces, the "Sinful Angel" and the "Holy Devil." The symbol of the dark force was Rasputin. Is it possible for me to present myself as the personification of the power of light? By

this I only mean that I was striving toward the truth, like all other human beings subject to error based on the influences of my education, the surroundings in which I passed my boyhood, and my subjection to superstitious prejudices. My character represents the secret energies within the human body which drive toward truth. Rasputin, on the other hand, was the "Holy Devil" in a body that was revered by all. He represented darkness, corruption, the source of the evils of Russia. He was, in short, a devil clothed in the garments of an angel.

Whoever reads my book can have no two opinions of Rasputin's activity. The reader's soul will overflow with feelings of indignation and revolt against the famous "saint of the court" and his mad and selfish sovereigns and other devotees. In picturing the "Holy Devil" I shall attempt to be mainly objective. I shall endeavor to write as if the "saint" had never done me any harm; and if, anywhere, even for a moment, I give vent merely to my own feelings, I pray the reader to forgive me. I think my readers will gladly be lenient with me after they have become acquainted with the facts that I present, when the portrait of the "Holy Devil" rises before them, undeniably clear and authentic, a portrait painted not by an artist of the brush, but by a very modest artist of the word.

As I intend that this book shall not only be of interest to the popular reader, but shall serve as an in-

disputable historical document characterizing the religious, civil, and political life of Russia during the early twentieth century, in writing it I have followed only the most rigidly verified evidence. A list of my authorities I present here:

(1) Czar Nicholas's opinion of the saint, which I heard in person when I was presented to him on May 21, 1911, at 5 P. M.

(2) Czarina Alexandra's opinion of the saint, which I heard in person when I was presented to her on April 3, 1909, at 9 P. M.

(3) Letters and opinions of the saint written or expressed in the hearing of all by Grand Duchess Militza Nicolaïvna.

(4) Rasputin's own stories about himself and the part he played at the court, etc. (Diaries in his own handwriting and collected sayings.)

(5) Letters of eminent ecclesiastics, bishops and archimandrites, about Rasputin, addressed both to me and to other persons, and their stories about Rasputin.

(6) "The Life of an Experienced Pilgrim," written by Rasputin himself and transcribed by Chionia Berlatzkaya.

(7) The voluminous diaries, running to 200 or 250 pages each, of Mme. Olga Lochtina, believed to have been the first dupe of the saint, in which she tells truthfully and in detail the story of her acquaintance with Rasputin and his activities, citing copies of his numerous letters and telegrams to the imperial

family, archbishops and other prominent personages.

(8) Testimonies regarding Rasputin by authors, journalists, ministers, officials, and other persons.

(9) Copies and originals of many letters and telegrams that Rasputin sent to the imperial family, to personages of high rank, and to me, his former friend.

(10) Oral and written confessions of women made before priests, describing the "arts" of the saint, persons who suffered through Rasputin, and later denounced him; namely, the nurse of the imperial children, Miss M. I. Vishniakova; Miss Timofeyev; Chionia Berlatzkaya, an officer's widow; the nun Xenia Goncharova; Helen, a coachman's wife; Z. Vostrikova, a priest's wife; her sister, Mme. Bourkova; Mme. Vargoun, her daughter; an acquaintance of hers, the Tsaritzin shopkeeper, A. M. Lebedeva; Mme. Golovkova; Mme. Lochtina's daughter Lada; and others.

(11) All that I myself saw of Rasputin's activities in the presence of witnesses or in circumstances that make my account equally indisputable.

Documentary proofs of almost the whole of my story—that is to say, letters, telegrams, six volumes of Mme. Lochtina's original diaries, all kinds of other records, and the manuscript of "The Life of an Experienced Pilgrim"—are now in my possession.

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

PAGE

FOREWORD vii

PART I THE ABBOT OF TSARITZIN

CHAPTER

I MY CHILDHOOD 3

II I BECOME THE SPOKESMAN OF AUTOCRACY . . . 19

III "THE MAD MONK" 41

PART II RASPUTIN, UNOFFICIAL CZAR OF RUSSIA

I MY ACQUAINTANCE WITH RASPUTIN 87

II RASPUTIN'S OWN STORY 154

III RASPUTIN AND THE CZAR'S COURT 167

PART III MY STRUGGLE WITH RASPUTIN

I WE UNMASK THE "HOLY DEVIL" 215

II THE TRIUMPH OF RASPUTIN 239

III I ESCAPE FROM RUSSIA 268

PART IV ALL'S WELL THAT ENDS WELL

I MY LIFE IN CHRISTIANIA 293

II I COME TO AMERICA 339

EPILOGUE 358

LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS

PAGE

Iliodor . . . . . *Frontispiece*

Iliodor as a seminarian 9

Home of Father Iliodor's Parents at Bolschoye . . 23

Iliodor as a student 34

Iliodor with his family at Bolschoye 43

Father Iliodor and his devotees at the Shrine of Saint Seraphim 54

The old monastery at Tsaritzin 63

The new monastery at Tsaritzin 63

Grave of one of Father Iliodor's followers 69

Celebration of Alexander Nevsky Day at Tsaritzin Monastery 76

Gregory Rasputin 89

Postcard written by Anna Viroubova 100

Red shirt presented by the Czarina to Rasputin . . 117

Celebration of Alexander Nevsky's Name-Day in the main square of Tsaritzin 127

Iliodor during a visit to his father's people 141

Pilgrimage of Father Iliodor and his followers on the Volga, July, 1911 152

ILLUSTRATIONS

PAGE

Page of the manuscript of "The Life of an Experienced Pilgrim" 157

Rasputin surrounded by his court followers . . . 179

Postcard written to Rasputin by Madame Lochtina . 190

Page from Madame Lochtina's diaries 203

A group of Father Iliodor's followers who volunteered to dig the underground passage 221

Page of Gregory Rasputin's diary 247

Iliodor in civilian dress 257

Facsimile of telegram sent by Madame Lochtina to Anna Viroubova 271

Reverse of telegram 272

The House at Bolschoye from which Iliodor made his escape 277

Iliodor immediately after his unfrocking 288

White silk shirt embroidered by the Czarina and given by her to Rasputin 305

Sergius M. Trufanoff 331

Madame Trufanoff, Iliodor's wife, and their two children 331

Autograph of Iliodor 349

PART I

THE ABBOT OF TSARITZIN

THE MAD MONK OF RUSSIA

CHAPTER I

MY CHILDHOOD

My life began in a poor peasant's hut, it blossomed forth among royal palaces, and finally descended to the level of exile and anxious care in a foreign land. It has been a wonderful life. Born amidst poverty and misery, I attained a high degree of power, influence, esteem, and fame. The ruler of Russia defended me even when it seemed that I was becoming a menace to the Holy Synod, to the nobility, and to the Government.

But the quest of truth tormented my conscience. Still greater power and influence could have been mine for the asking had I not discerned the light of truth.

My fatherland is Russia. I was born on the banks of the Don River, the river of the people's magnanimity, pride, and wrath; the river whose turbid waters softly whisper how in the days of old freedom-loving men used to flock to its banks; serfs who strove for liberty, boyars, or noblemen, who would not bend to the czar's will, rebellious priests, and persecuted sectarians.

On those mysterious shores, from which stretch out the free steppes; across the limitless expanse of which the bold Cossack gallops, singing the slow and doleful songs of the ancient Cossack freedom, and the young Cossack maiden, wandering along the winding paths among the high stalks of golden rye, awaits her lover, I was born and brought up.

In my veins flowed the blood of people whose entire social, political, and religious philosophy can be best summed up in the words of the Don Cossack's catechism:

"What have you in your hand?"

"A gun."

"For what were you given the gun?"

"To protect from external and internal enemies his Imperial Majesty the Emperor and Autocrat of All the Russias."

"What reward will you get for it?"

"The kingdom of heaven."

In that lies all of the philosophy and religion of the Don Cossack. As a result, the only people in the world that he regards as wholly indispensable are the officers of the army and the priests, the former because they teach him how to use the rifle, the latter because they are supposed to bring down God's blessing on his head for his proficiency in warfare. Beyond these he knows nobody and cares to know nobody.

In the Cossack's estimation, a king is a veritable god on earth, although he is no more than a Cossack,

after all. To him the czar is the first man in the world, and therefore must be a Don Cossack, since there is no higher being than a Don Cossack. Try to prove to him that Nicholas is a "Great Russian"; you will find that it is of no avail. If you are audacious enough to tell the Cossack that the number of drops of Russian blood that Nicholas has in his veins does not amount to more than the number of hairs on your palms, he will shoot you dead if he has a gun at hand; if he has a stick, he will kill you with it; and if he is empty-handed, he will throw himself upon you and strangle you with his strong, callous hands.

In making these statements I refer, of course, only to the masses, from which used to be recruited the defenders of the czar's throne against its internal enemies, who were known to the Cossack under two names, revolutionaries and Zidi (Jews).

Such was the atmosphere in which I was born. All my male ancestors died fighting for the czar, and all my family have devoted their lives to religion. My maternal grandmother, from the age of twenty to ninety, made her livelihood by planting potatoes and wheat with her own hands, in fasting and prayers. During her latter years she reached such a physical and spiritual condition that she became clairvoyant. Of this I will give you an illustration.

Four years before the great catastrophe of my life —that is to say, four years before I was unfrocked— I paid a visit to this dear old grandmother. She was

in her bed, and I greeted her. She looked at me and said:

"Who has come?"

"Grandmother," I said, "is it possible that you do not recognize me? This is your grandson, the Monk Iliodor."

"No, I do not see a monk. I see a worldly man in civilian dress and with short hair," she replied.

I approached very close to her and said: "Grandmother, look. I have long hair and I wear the cowl. And see, here is my cross; look at my cassock."

She gazed at me and said: "No, no; I see only a man of the world."

I left her with a terrible feeling of oppression, for this was four years before I renounced the church, and I had not the slightest thought in my mind that such a thing could happen.

My father and mother knew nothing outside of religion. It filled all their lives. My father was one of the deacons of the church. He was a very intelligent man but his brain was greatly overcharged with religious matters. Forty-seven years he served the same church, and during those years virtually all day long he was in the church singing halleluiahs to God. This year, at the age of seventy-two, my father has been pensioned by the church for his forty-eight years of service. He is a well-read man, with a deep knowledge of natural history and astronomy, but no reading of scientific books could ever change his religious convictions. He has gone through life in poverty, but

has educated eight children. The only consolation he has found for carrying this burden has been in tilling the soil and in constant prayers for divine help. His income, I remember, used to be thirteen rubles, or six dollars, a month on which to support a family of ten.

We lived in extreme poverty, and as famine years are very frequent in Russia, our food often consisted of bread and water only, and even for this we had to struggle. On one occasion we were sitting together at table, father and mother and all the children in a semicircle, eating crusts and what we called "soup," which was made of water and noodles. My mother suddenly arose and began to weep, saying, "O God! how am I going to feed all these children?" and then collapsed.

My family consisted originally of thirteen members, five of whom died in early childhood, no doubt as a result of under-nourishment. All the children were normal. When one little sister was a baby, my father being ill, my mother had to take the children to school, so that there was no one to feed the little one. When my mother returned, the child was dead.

I regard it as a miracle that my parents were able to give all their children a good education, because at that time there were no free public schools, and, however little my father had to pay, his whole property consisted of little more than a pig, a cow, and a few chickens. Of eight children, six received a higher education and two an ordinary school education.

Two of my sisters are school-teachers; two brothers are priests; two are officers in the army, one on the Caucasian front and the other on the Riga front; one brother teaches in a high school; and I am here. My mother is seventy. My father still prays for me, and my mother prays and weeps for me, and thanks God that at last I have found a peaceful harbor in America.

Between the ages of six and twenty-five I was under the severest religious discipline. For nineteen years I had inculcated in my mind love for God, love for the czar as the vicegerent of God, and the complete renunciation of earthly life and ties. It was with me as with the Chinese in the early days—to produce the misshapen court dwarfs they would place a newborn child in a bottle, which, as the child grew, exerted a pressure upon the brain and the body. There was a dwarfing of the mental faculties in virtually every other direction in order that they might be overdeveloped in one.

During the period prior to my complete submission I was often punished and beaten without mercy. In school the teacher explained to us one day the creation of the world, illustrating by means of soapy water and a straw. He blew the bubble and said:

"See, boys; thus the Great Master created the world." He blew another bubble, and there was the sun; still another for the moon; and so on. I got up and said to the teacher:

"Well, he must have blown big bubbles."

ILIODOR AS A SEMINARIAN
Aged 20

This was considered blasphemous, and my punishment consisted in kneeling for fifteen hours with my bare knees on dried beans, until they went into the sensitive flesh, causing excruciating pain.

On another occasion the priest (all the teachers were priests) said that the world was created about seven thousand years ago, and I exclaimed:

"Oh, then God must be really a very old, old man."

For this little remark I was beaten and sent home, and it was only after my father also had severely punished me that I was permitted to return.

All the other boys could read and write, but at five and a half years I could not write a single letter of the alphabet. At Christmas time, when the children were sent home for the holidays, the teacher took a book containing a little lecture on the city and said, "Take a note-book and copy this article describing a city." My brother gave me several little note-books, some good ink, a new pen, and a penholder, and I believed that just because of this excellent material I would be able to copy the article better than any one else, even though I could not write a single letter. Energetically I set to work, and for two weeks of my vacation I tried to write. I saw the word "city," but not knowing how to write, I made little marks. Where there was a line, I made a line, copying everything with great exactness. In order that no one might see my masterpiece, I did it secretly. There were drawings of a church, a little house, and other objects, and I said to myself, "How am I going to copy these

drawings?" I made little squares and lines, which to me signified a picture. When I returned to school, all the pupils brought to the teacher the lessons that they had done during the holidays. I also presented my work, believing that, as my note-book was better than the note-books of the others, the teacher would proclaim me the best pupil in the class. He looked at me in amazement, then said: "Bring me the little school-bag." He put the note-book in the bag and the string of the bag about my neck and said: "You are an idiot. Go home, and return in a year."

In a year I did return, and became the best pupil in the class.

When I was ten years of age I was taken from the village school to the city. My little heart told me that I was going into another life, and on the road from the village to the city, on several occasions when the horses slowed up, I jumped from the wagon and kissed the trees and flowers and even the earth of the country-side, weeping bitterly. There were to be no green fields, no flowers, no singing birds any more, and I was to find that everything I had thought sacred in the village was laughed at in the city.

As we approached the town,—it was Novo Tcherkask, capital of the district of the Don,—my brother, who had already seen cities and wanted to play a joke upon me, said:

"When we enter the town you will see a woman made out of stone. When you see this woman you must kneel down and kiss her."

It was dark when we arrived. My brother said:

"Get out of the wagon. There stands the stone woman."

Such was my excitement, my credulity, imagination, and the nerve tension under which I was that, although it was dark and there was no stone woman, I actually knelt and kissed the empty space, believing I saw this woman. It was only after my brother shook me that I realized the joke.

It was at that period, finding no sympathizers among the little city children, that I encountered experiences which for the first time tended to sow in me the seeds of protest.

It is true that from a very tender age the falsity of life had begun to agitate my soul and prompt it, with pain and disturbance, to seek the truth. Of the many instances of my suffering from human injustice I shall cite here only two. The instances I speak of are mentioned in a book written about me in Russia, from which I quote the following:

> Deacon Michael [my father] owned no property to speak of, except ten children, and was of the opinion that one could tell a priest even though he were clad in rags. And this being the case, he saw nothing wrong in his son wearing a coat made for some one else and boots "with open mouths." The son's schoolmates and teachers, however, held a different opinion on the subject. Sergius [that is, myself], with his extraordinarily long coat, was regarded by them as the most fitting target for jokes and ridicule. One of the teachers delighted in calling Sergius to his dais and saying to him: "Well, let 's see your back." Sergius turned. "And now

turn your side toward me." The boy, ready to burst into tears, obeyed. Laughter, now suppressed, now hilarious, was heard in the class-room. The teacher continued with an earnest mien, "Now face me." And with feigned gravity he would survey the low waist of the coat reaching to the boy's ankles, his torn trousers, his patched shoes, and the whole sorrowful appearance of the persecuted child. After having had his full measure of fun, the teacher would allow Sergius, accompanied by the laughter of the whole class, to return to his seat.

The second case is related in the book as follows:

The term was almost over, and the time to leave school for the vacation had come. For the first time in his life Sergius purchased a ticket of the fourth class and embarked on a homeward-bound steamer, which seemed to him like one of the wonders of the Arabian Nights. Despite his unusually long coat and badly worn trousers, he kept on running from one deck to the other, as though wishing to learn all about the wonderful steel creature. The firemen handled him roughly, the stewards pushed him out of the way, but he paid not the least attention to them. He peered into the engine compartment, he visited the saloons of the first and second classes. The staterooms, however, attracted most of his attention. They seemed so comfortable; they were furnished with portières, sofas, tables, just like a well-appointed house. Before Sergius knew it, he bumped into the owner of the steamer, one Chumakov, a retired general who had four concubines and a capital of two million rubles. "Your ticket!" he demanded sternly. "My brother has it," replied Sergius. "I know you cheats; you can't fool me! Come on, let 's see where your brother is." And seizing Sergius by the ear he began to drag him about the steamer. As bad luck would have it, the brother could not be found. A strong wind was blowing, and he had sought shelter some-

where. Three times, exposed to everybody's ridicule, Sergius was dragged from deck to deck until he finally located his brother. The ship-owner examined the tickets, found that everything was in order, and majestically returned to his state-room. And the price of the ticket was only sixty-five kopecks!"

It is possible that from then on the fire of protest against falsity and injustice in every possible form began to consume my soul. This fire turned into an all-consuming conflagration when I reached the age of twenty. Its flames are still scorching me, and to this day the fire is not burned out.

One other anecdote I will relate. Of my teacher I once inquired, "God is spirit. How, then, could he speak from heaven to Christ when he was baptized in the Jordan?"

The teacher grasped me by the nape of the neck and dragged me to the little "school prison" where boys were placed for punishment. With his knee he kicked me in the back so that I fell across the wall, and said, "Here you will find out how God spoke from heaven to Christ when he was baptized in the Jordan." Then he tried to force me to write a letter to my father, saying that I had become a blasphemous little brigand.

By such means a religious education was inculcated in me. After the age of fifteen I looked not only upon the czar as the agent of God, but also upon every monk, priest, or bishop. Every word that they spoke was for me the law that in no circumstances

could I transgress. At the age of sixteen or seventeen my faith was like a rock that you could neither move, crush, nor break.

It was at this time that I entered the secondary theological seminary of Novo Tcherkask. Here the same system prevailed as in the secular schools, but the pupils, by all sorts of strategy, succeeded in going their own way, the majority living immoral lives, mentally as well as physically. The teachers never approached these boys in a personal way. They had only one thought in mind—how to force them to obey the rules and regulations of the school. I was exasperated when I saw how differently my classmates lived from the way they were taught, and I decided to become a leader among them, to gain an ascendancy over them. In short, I energetically protested against the unbecoming behavior of my classmates and teachers, and this resulted in my being generally feared.

What annoyed my classmates most was my biting tongue and the remarks that I directed at those of them who considered it their duty as grown young men to drink, gamble, use profane language, and visit houses of ill repute.

I attacked these habits by ridicule. Those of my companions who visited houses of ill repute returned, as a rule, late at night. Since the gates were locked, they were obliged to crawl in underneath on their stomachs. I mimicked them in these exploits, and as a result of these illustrated sermons, the young men

who became targets of my ridicule would usually abstain from sinning altogether, or at least make an end of bragging of it. In a similar way I was a veritable pest for those of my schoolmates who used to gamble, or steal sugar, tea, shoes, and the clothing of their comrades.

Prompted by some mysterious force, I began also to treat my teachers in a rather audacious manner. Once I carried my inclination to express my opinions so far that I was all but expelled from the seminary.

Our Inspector had gone to Petrograd to see the officials of the Holy Synod, most probably with the object of obtaining an increase of salary. On his return he assembled us all and, after giving us a lesson in religion, delivered himself somewhat as follows:

"Well, children, I have been to Petrograd. I have seen my superiors, the officials of the Holy Synod! Oh, how they deport themselves! How the minor officials respect their elders! How they bow before their superiors, and how obedient they are to them! And what do we see here among ourselves? A man of no importance, a nonentity, sets himself up—above whom, pray? His teachers, his inspectors, and even the rector."

I do not know how long this lecture would have continued to flow from the honey-sweet lips of our inspector; but I could bear it no longer, and came out with my protest.

"Andrey Alexandrovitch, you are teaching us to be sycophants."

"What 's that? What do you say, Trufanoff?"

"I said you were teaching us to be sycophants."

The inspector hurled the class-journal down on the table and rushed out of the room.

Three days later a consultation of the teachers was called to consider my case. The majority of them expressed themselves in favor of expelling me from the seminary. What is more, they suggested that, although I was under age I should be forced to join the army. It was nothing short of a miracle that saved me from this heavy punishment. A few of the teachers took my part. They pointed out that it would be cruel to mete out such a punishment to a mere "light-minded" boy. In the end I was allowed to remain.

CHAPTER II

I BECOME THE SPOKESMAN OF AUTOCRACY

I WAS graduated from the seminary in 1900, at the age of twenty. My graduation gave me the right to be ordained to the priesthood. Life then opened its gates before me and showed me its roads. I asked myself, "Which road shall I choose?" I wished to work hard, and I desired also to remain alone all my life, without a family, in order to be free like an eagle, whose flight is hindered by nothing.

To achieve this aim it was necessary for me to become a monk, to estrange myself from the world, and to burn my ships behind me.

However, one cannot become a monk in Russia at the age of twenty, and therefore I went to Petrograd to continue my studies at the academy of divinity. My only aim in doing this was to fill in the time until I reached the legitimate age for entering a monastery and beginning my true life.

In order to harden my spirit, at the academy, I subjected myself to great privations. On one occasion I fasted three days, refusing even bread and water, and for two months I slept neither night nor day, spending the time in continuous prayers. Of course these privations reacted detrimentally on my body

and also on my mind; so that, emaciated physically and exalted spritually, I saw visions. I saw Christ. I saw evil spirits that grasped me by the hair and dragged me, shouting: "You shall not escape from us! You shall not escape from us!" And I saw monsters, with immense iron forks, that screamed: "You are ours! You are ours!" In short, I brought myself to the point of mental and physical collapse. But my body had great recuperative powers, and I regained my strength and poise.

To show that this discipline of mine was not exceptional, I can cite the case of another student who was preparing himself for the monastic life. Standing before a candle one night and meditating on the words of the Bible, "If thy right eye offend thee," he took the candle and burned an eye out. Since then he has become a bishop.

At the age of twenty-three, while a student of the third year at the academy, I finally reached my goal. I forsook the lay world and took the habit. My former name, Sergius, was changed to Iliodor.

My decision to become a monk had met with great opposition, not only from my classmates, but also from my parents. I myself was not without misgivings. There was a man named Mitia the Blissful, whom every one considered a clairvoyant, and about whom I shall have more to say later in this book. I believed in his divinity and called upon him to ask his benediction. Mitia told me not to become a monk, "because," he said, "if you do, you will marry just the

same. This has been revealed to me by God." Like everyone else, I believed in Mitia, but notwithstanding this I persisted in my determination. I may add here, however, that during my life as a monk, which lasted ten years, the prophecy of Mitia the Blissful hung over my head like the sword of Damocles, and stimulated my efforts to keep body and soul as pure as possible, in order that this prophecy of his would not come true.

When ordained to monasticism, I vowed to shun women, to amass no riches, and to obey my superiors. Obedience is considered higher and more important than fasting and prayers. During the entire period of my monastic life I kept the first two vows in the most exacting manner, and this gave me the spiritual strength with which I used to influence all those who came into contact with me. Knowing not women, I was able to subjugate spiritually both men and women. I was entirely unmercenary, and this disarmed even my worst enemies. As for the third vow, that of obedience, I kept that also, but not in a way that pleased my superiors. I kept it in my own way. I obeyed those who followed in God's footsteps; for my striving was to serve not human beings, but God and His truth. I recognized no human authorities. The reader will see, as my story unfolds, what were the results of this obedience.

In June, 1905, I was graduated from the academy with honors. Now that I was a monk, it was no longer proper for me to go home to my parents on the

Don River. I therefore spent the summer at the Alexandro Nevskaia Lavra, the greatest monastery in Russia, to which the academy is attached. I was waiting for an appointment that was not to be settled definitely before the early part of October.

Meanwhile I preached every evening in the public squares and the lodging-houses of the poor. These services had come into vogue in the last two years of my student life in Petrograd. The movement had been fostered by an informal group of divinity students to which I belonged, and Father Gapon, who later became famous, was the spokesman. Father Gapon was one year ahead of me in his studies at the academy. Because of a lack of room in the dormitory, he was installed at the hospital at a time when, in my junior year, I had contracted a severe cold in the intestines and was compelled to lie in the hospital for nearly eight weeks. My acquaintance with Gapon there ripened into friendship.

In his conversations with me at the hospital Father Gapon frequently emphasized the need of the church becoming acquainted with the problems of the masses. He began going among the people as a missionary, and with a number of other students I followed in his footsteps, though only to a certain point. On one occasion Gapon invited me to go with him to see some friends who, he said, were "worth while." He spoke in a mysterious way about these friends and what they were planning to do for the fatherland; but as I had

HOME OF ILIODOR'S PARENTS AT BOLSCHOYE,
District of Don, 1910

just taken the habit, I thought it out of keeping for me to go about visiting Gapon's lay friends, and therefore declined his invitation. Gapon's friendship for me cooled perceptibly after that. He left the academy in the spring of 1904, and it was not for some time after that I discovered the equivocal nature of the man.

Thus I spent the summer of 1905 largely in missionary work among the poor of Petrograd. In the market-places I addressed the working-people, and I preached in the lodging-houses to the dregs of the under-world, the barefoot brigade of beggars, thieves, and degenerates. I made it part of my duty to visit the houses of the rich and make collections for these poor outcasts of humanity, but the work was discouraging. For example, one day some poor fellows came to me, begging for shoes. I myself went and bought for each one a pair of good shoes. The next day these same tramps came to me again barefooted.

"I gave you all shoes. What has become of them?" I asked.

"You must have seen shoes in a dream: we never received any shoes. You do not understand our situation at all," they replied. Incidents like this made me feel that my activities were hopeless.

Nevertheless, these experiences set me thinking. One evening as I was returning to the monastery from one of the lodging-house services I walked into a group of drunken workmen who were standing there

brawling among themselves. One of the workmen blocked my way and, shaking his finger in my face, began to shout hoarsely:

"We will get you. We will get all of you priests. We will cut open your bellies like this—" and he made a graphic gesture with his hands. "You have grown fat. There is gold in your churches. We will get this gold and buy sweets for our babies with it and real vodka, not the cheap trash they sell us now."

The intense hatred in the man's eyes paralyzed me for the moment. I seemed incapable of motion. I stood there gazing at his drawn face, his disheveled hair, and distended nostrils. Then the precariousness of my position dawned on me. I was in one of the most dangerous alleys in Petrograd. I began to speak to the men. I showed them that I had nothing to defend myself with, and told them that as a monk I was forbidden to defend myself even with my hands. My words had the desired effect. One of the men less drunk than the rest pulled my assailant aside.

"Go on, father," he said. "No harm will be done to you."

As a student of divinity I had of course shared the opinion of my superiors that all these mutinies of the people were groundless; that they were stirred up by revolutionaries, who made dupes of the masses. I heartily concurred with the Government in its efforts to weed out insubordination to autocracy. This incident, however, caused me to reflect upon the correctness of my views. Men without deep and abiding

grievances, I mused, could never be consumed with such fierce hatred. I began to reflect more deeply about the state of my country. I decided to find out for myself just how much ground there was for discontent in Russia. I took off my habit, dressed like a common laborer, and went once more to the haunts of poverty, to the cheap lodging-houses of the underworld, this time incognito.

Things now opened themselves up to me, and I saw and heard so much that I spent a good part of the summer in such researches. A new light dawned before my eyes. I had diagnosed the disease my fatherland was suffering from, and thought I had a cure for it. It was clear that things were radically wrong in Holy Russia, though the proper persons to right the wrongs, I felt, were not the revolutionists, but the clergy. Russia needed a revolution, but a revolution led in the name of God; yes, and even in the name of the czar—a revolution against a weak nobility, a brutal police, a corrupt court.

Brooding over these problems, I secluded myself from people. I ate little and became pale and haggard. I prayed to God to enlighten me, to point out to me the road to happiness and prosperity for the masses of Russia. For several evenings in succession I shut myself up in my cell, lighted candles before the ikons in the corner, and held services before an improvised altar. I prayed and sang aloud, and all so unconsciously that one evening, when I had concluded the service and turned about, I was amazed to see

Archimandrite Theophanes, the inspector of the academy, sitting in the far corner of my cell. He had slipped in without my knowing it.

The inspector laid his hand upon my shoulder. I was his favorite pupil, his protégé. He had picked me out and persistently conducted me toward the ways of light, seeing in me a future pillar of Orthodoxy. Theophanes was grieved.

"Iliodor," he said, "you are ill. I have been observing you for some time. You have been applying yourself to the service of the Lord and of the czar too zealously. You must beware of your health. Your nerves are torn to fragments. You need a rest. Tomorrow I shall see Archimandrite Michael of the Sergieva Pustin Monastery. I shall ask him if he cannot receive you for a few weeks until you recover your health."

Two days later I received an invitation from Archimandrite Michael, asking me to come and stay with him as long as I liked.

The Sergieva Pustin Monastery lies twenty miles distant from Petrograd and is the most aristocratic monastery in Russia. Within its grounds lie buried innumerable grand dukes, ministers, and other exalted personages, while bordering on these grounds is the village of Strelna, composed almost exclusively of villas, the most beautiful and luxurious summer homes to be found anywhere in the empire.

Archimandrite Michael received me with open arms. He gave me a cell next to his own quarters, on

the ground floor of the main wing of the monastery. He called in his first deacon, Avraami, a monk who, although only thirty-five years old, had a wide experience with churchmen, nobles, and the royalty of Russia, and assigned him as my guide and companion. Avraami and I were on friendly terms from the first.

Toward evening of the second day we took a stroll through the monastery grounds. We turned toward Strelna, and walked along a beautiful lane. Avraami chatted readily and without embarrassment about the villas and their occupants.

"The lane through which we are walking," he said to me, "is sometimes facetiously called 'Morganatic Lane,' because almost all its houses belong to the morganatic wives and mistresses of the Russian royalty." Then, in his calm voice he began telling me monstrous tales of the corruption of the aristocracy—tales that seemed monstrous to me, a young monk, though they were of course mere commonplaces to people of the world.

That night I slept little. I sat by the open window of my cell, looking out over the lovely villas of the royal mistresses. I thought of the extravagances of the rich and the misery of the poor. I had been taught that the heart of the czar lies in the hand of God and that the eye of the people is the eye of God. I could not believe that the divine could be contradictory to the divine, that the heart of the czar could contradict the eye of the people, which is the eye of God. To the marrow of my bones I believed that

the happiness of the people was bound up with the happiness of the czar. I looked upon autocracy as a lovely rose spreading its beauty and perfume over all the people. Now I began to perceive that the attar and wonderful perfume of the rose were taken by the intermediaries between the czar and the people, that the people got only the thorns.

In the autumn I was appointed professor at the Jaroslavl Theological Seminary on the Volga. Inspector Theophanes brought me the news of the appointment.

"Gregory Rasputin," he said, "has aided you greatly. The sage is very much taken with you. He has been talking about you in high places. He will be of great help to you in the future."

The story of my acquaintance with Rasputin I shall defer to the next chapter, but as I shall have occasion to mention him a number of times in this, I wish briefly to define the nature of our early relations. I, as a young monk, was extremely flattered by the attentions of one whom I supposed to be a holy man, and it may be that Gregory's friendship for me was at first entirely disinterested. At intervals I served as his amanuensis, for he was all but illiterate, having learned to write his signature only after the age of thirty. As my reader will learn, I was appointed to give him some preliminary instruction at a moment when he desired to become a priest. As time went on, and his enemies increased and his evil exploits began to leak out, he looked about for supporters among

people of influence who could take his side both with the czar and the people. Then, owing to the popularity and power I had achieved among the masses, Gregory turned to me with redoubled affection, as I supposed it to be, and held me closer and closer as the most valuable of his allies; and in order to bind me to him and add to the significance of my support, he pushed me forward and furthered my career in every possible way.

Now at the very outset of my career, with Rasputin behind me, I found myself in the center of all the most powerful forces in Russia. As a favorite of Theophanes and a marked man among the young graduates of the academy, I saw myself a chosen leader in the reaction, a spokesman of Orthodoxy and the czar, and I was accepted as such. I was introduced to society and placed on terms of friendship with counts, princes, and other dignitaries. At the end of a year, therefore, especially as I found teaching somewhat uncongenial, I resigned my professorship and returned to Petrograd.

But no sooner had I been received into these circles than I became aware of the falsity, duplicity, hypocrisy, and greed that they harbored. I began almost at once a struggle with the nobility, the ministers, the court clique, and even the Holy Synod, which only ended with my exile from the country, and soon led me to leave the capital and "go to the people."

This struggle began with my visit to the czar's friend, General Eugène Bogdanovitch, at Petrograd.

The visit was arranged with the express object of introducing me to society. Bogdanovitch invited to his residence the entire aristocracy of Petrograd in order to acquaint them with the newly risen star of the reaction. A special deputation was sent to me to invite me to attend the gathering. I was introduced to many prominent persons. They all flattered me in the most repulsive way, and tried their utmost to display their love for the czar, for Russia, and for the Orthodox Russian faith. They talked for all they were worth, and I heard all kinds of accents, French and German prevailing. One thing only was missing, a purely Russian pronunciation.

After we had finished talking, the hospitable general invited his guests to the dining-room. It was during Lent, when, according to the laws of the church, Orthodox Russians are not allowed to eat meat or even fish. They sat down to the table without saying grace. I did not sit down, for I noticed a great number of meat dishes on the table. Instead, I addressed the assembly as follows:

"Gentlemen, I shall not partake of the meal with you. You are insincere and double-dealing persons. In the adjoining room you spoke of your devotion to Orthodoxy, and in this room you trample your own words and Orthodxy under your feet. You have sat down at the table without saying grace. You are going to eat meat though it is Lent. Farewell!"

The guests became embarrassed. Amid dead silence I left the house. Before I had time to reach

ILIODOR AS A STUDENT
Aged 21

my home the telephone wires all over the city were busy. Princess B—— B—— was asking Countess M—— M——:

"Have you heard about it? What do you think of Iliodor? What unheard of audacity! Why, he scolded everybody! Eugène Vasileyevitch has been taken ill on account of the scandal." And Countess M—— M—— replied:

"You see now, don't you? I told you long ago that this seminary student must not be admitted to our society. They lack manners, those seminary students do. I 've known them for a long time. My husband can't bear the sight of them. They are all bad enough, but Iliodor is by far the worst. They are all ruffians of the worst sort."

And as if by magic my best friends turned into bitter enemies, and decided to keep a vigilant eye on me lest I prove to be another Gapon, who had led the people to the czar's palace to demand rights and more freedom.

I made a great number of enemies, but I still retained many friends, and the latter requested Nicholas to make me a preacher of patriotism in the regiments of the Imperial Guard, stationed at Petrograd, Tsarskoe Selo, New and Old Peterhof, and the neighborhood of Petrograd in general. For a long time Nicholas could not make up his mind, for he feared to quarrel with the court clergy, who did not like to admit new men to their circle. But at last, under the pressure of the guard commanders, the czar

gave his consent. The commanders assembled at Old Peterhof and decided to examine me and give me a trial. They took me to the Officers' Club of the Dragoon Regiment in Old Peterhof, and asked me to deliver a speech before the soldiers, telling them that the peasants needed no land and that they could honestly and devotedly serve the czar without owning any. It was Count Feodor Arthurovitch Keller who was specially persistent in asking me to deliver the sermon.

We went to the riding-house. On my way there I made up my mind to speak on the land question; but when we came to the riding-house and I saw the bright, candid faces of the Petkas, Vankas, and Grischkas, whose only hope it was that the czar would solve the question of land famine satisfactorily in recognition of their faithful service—when I saw them, I say, I changed the subject of my sermon. I spoke to them on the czar's throne, and told them that it rested on a foundation of corpses. I knew I was not saying what those who had brought me there wanted me to say. I saw the Arthurovitches and the Edouardovitches exchanging glances; but I could not stop, and I wound up my sermon with an appeal to the soldiers to defend the czar in the hope that he alone would grant land to the poor peasants.

A frightful scandal resulted. I failed utterly in my examination for the position of patriotic preacher to the soldiers; but the soldiers expressed their gratitude to me for my sermon, and greeted it with loud

hurrahs. In the confusion the Arthurovitches and Edouardovitches left the place unnoticed. Only Colonel Macziewsky, a Pole, remained with me. He escorted me home, and said to me on the way:

"You see, little Father! An hour ago they were with you, and now they have all left you. You understand that they were dissatisfied with your sermon. To-morrow they 'll see the czar and try to influence him against you, and the czar is a very weak and inconstant man. As an instance, let me tell you what once happened to me. He sent us to the Baltic Provinces to "quiet" the Letts. We had breakfast with the czar before we left, and he said to us, 'See that you show the rebels no mercy.' We of course replied that we should be glad to obey his Imperial Majesty. When we returned from our expedition he again had breakfast with us and said: 'I thank you for your faithful services. I hope it goes without saying that you did not treat them too cruelly.' We smiled, slightly embarrassed, and looked at one another. Then we said to him: 'No, your Majesty. They got off very easily.' Do you want to know how 'easily' they got off? Why, little Father, I myself hanged eighty-five men. To this day I see them before my eyes, hanging in a long, long row!"

The colonel covered his face with his hands, began to shiver, and burst out crying like a child. And then he continued:

"An accursed duty is ours. Every human being wants to live, but we think that only we are entitled

to live, and we flog and kill the people and teach our soldiers to flog and kill. The soldiers obey us, but they understand that they act against their own interests. They do not love the czar. These gorgeous parades and thundering cheers are nothing but a comedy. Before every parade we instruct the soldiers to shout hurrah at the top of their lungs when the czar makes his appearance."

My "examination" and the speech I delivered to the soldiers made a strong impression on me. A week later I published an open letter to the czar entitled, "When will the End of the Revolution Come?" Among other things I wrote as follows:

Czar, console the peasants with thy kindness. In thy imperial hands there are many means that common mortals do not possess. The stringent laws of land-ownership cannot be infringed upon by those who would like to see the common people happy at the expense of others. But for thee, great Ruler, there is nothing impossible in Russia. It was said once upon a time that the law of serfdom was immutable; but thy grandfather, the people's czar, abolished slavery forever with one stroke of his pen. Thy grandfathers, thy great-grandfathers, and thy great-grandmothers made grants of many thousands of acres of land to their courtiers. And thou, unlimited autocrat, art able to appropriate as many acres of those lands as are needed to distribute among thy devoted peasants. In order more easily to accomplish this, remove from thy palace and from thy court all those men in whose veins flows foreign blood and who are of the orthodox faith only because they are compelled to adhere to it, and replace them with men of purely Russian blood.

Influenced by this letter, the czar, as I was after-

wards told by Dubrovin, the leader of the Black Hundreds, summoned all his relatives for a consultation in order to decide whether or not the time had actually come to relinquish their land ownership in favor of the peasants. The relatives kept still and shrugged their shoulders. Suddenly Grand Duke Nicolas Nicholaïvitch rose, tore his coat and shirt, and full of anger shouted to the czar, "You want to take the shirts off our backs!" Nicholas became frightened, adjourned the meeting, and after that made no further attempts to distribute land among the peasants.

After my open letter to Nicholas, the abyss between my former friends and protectors and me began to grow wider and deeper. With very few exceptions, the entire court aristocracy came out against me. They declared me a dangerous revolutionary, and requested that my wings should be clipped before it was too late. And the Holy Synod, angered by my audacity and insubordination, took their part. I had already attacked the Synod for their slavish servility to the lay powers and to those who exercised influence at court. "You are not servants of the people," I had said, "but proud, selfish, mercenary masters." Now, at the end of 1907, I came out in the papers with a severe arraignment under the title, "To My High Judges," in which I addressed the Holy Synod as follows:

You taunt me with not knowing the Gospel and not adorning my soul with modesty. I was not taught to be modest

and tender-hearted; I was taught to be militant. As for you, you are meek and good and modest only when it pays you. You crawl in the dust before the strong and mighty in order to be able to satiate yourself with earthly happiness. You say to the people, "Store up treasures for the world to come," while you yourselves gather earthly treasures. You compel the people to turn away with disdain from all the good things in life because "man is mortal." How about yourselves? Are you immortal? And this is the result: the people starve and die of hunger, and you eat well and sleep on soft beds and dwell in palaces. No, I shall not obey you.

For having published this article the Holy Synod decided to unfrock me and to exile me to the monastery of Solovetzk, on the White Sea. But the czar had not lost faith in me as one of the rising hopes of autocracy. In this he had Rasputin behind him. When Isvolsky, the Procurator of the Holy Synod, submitted this decision to him, Nicholas wrote on the report the following words, "Do not molest Father Iliodor." The Synod bowed to the czar's will, but deep in their hearts they hid their anger, and decided to get even with me at the very first opportunity. For this they had to wait four years.

CHAPTER III

"THE MAD MONK"

MEANWHILE I decided to leave Petrograd and work among the peasants. I went to Volhynia, where I made my headquarters at Potchaevskaya Lavra, chief monastery, editing a religious paper and teaching and preaching.

I now began what my enemies soon branded as a political propaganda, although I attacked the revolutionists without mercy, classing the Jews with them. With all the violence of the temperament of a Don Cossack I fought with my influence for the church and the czar and the Russian people; but I fought those who stood near the czar, and whom I considered to be against him. I remonstrated with those who stood on the highest rung of society's ladder; and at the other end of the scale I demanded that the Government should treat the revolutionists without any mercy whatsoever, because they lived without God in their hearts. The Jews I hated with every fiber of my soul. In the Jew I saw only the descendants of the priests of Judea who, pursuing their trivial personal interests, had condemned to death the greatest Jew that ever lived. Of the Jewish scholar, the Jewish artist, the Jewish author, and the Jewish inventor I knew nothing. All I had been taught about the Jews

was this: the Jew drinks human blood, the Jew regards it as a pious deed to kill a Christian, the anti-Christ will spring from Jewish stock, the Jew is accursed by God, the Jew is the source of all the evil in the world. My hatred of Jews was thus based wholly on religious fanaticism. The Jew in private life I did not know, and the first Jews I actually met were here in America.

The sincerity and vigor of my struggles against the revolutionists knew no limits. Leaving Potshaev, I traveled from one end of Russia to the other, through mountains and valleys, cities and villages, preaching everywhere. The people followed me by thousands and tens of thousands. The religious processions were miles in length. I used all kinds of pictures suggesting the divine attributes of the czar. On the Volga River I engaged the largest steamers, filling them with my followers. Thousands and thousands floated on the wide waters of the beautiful stream, praising God and singing.

I used all kinds of allegories to impress the people with the dangers emanating from the revolutionists. On one occasion I had constructed a dragon, which symbolized the revolution. In the interior of this dragon, following the idea of the Horse of Troy, I placed little children dressed as demons, and I preached that out of this foul mouth proceeded the devils of devastation, starvation, and death. Seeing how the people were impressed when these little demons jumped out of the dragon, I grasped the oppor-

ILIODOR WITH HIS FAMILY AT BOLSCHOYE

tunity and said, "Let us burn this monster that devours the heart of Russia." The people, hypnotized by my eloquence, burned the dragon, signifying by this act the breaking up of the revolution. It was through this particular episode that I came into prominence.

Virtually every one who listened to me became my follower. With those who did not come to me I followed the example of Mohammed. In the churches that I visited during the Christmas season I saw only the common people, and, noting the absence of the better classes, I asked where they were. At night I went to the theaters, restaurants, and places of amusement where they congregated, and although I spoke to none of the heretics, my mere presence was a reproach to them. Frequently, at my approach, I observed gamblers trying to collect their money and cards to hide them, and being unable to do so.

My success was due, first, to my convincing and powerful eloquence and my clean moral life, of which every one knew; and, second, to my absolute humility. I continued fasting; I slept on wooden blocks without mattress or pillow. The people considered me a saint, and many who were sick and suffering came to ask for healing, attributing divine power to me.

The revolutionists, meanwhile, sent me anonymous letters threatening to kill me. On one occasion they placed ten bombs in the Potchaevskaya Monastery to blow it up. The secret police discovered this plot in time to save me.

While I was exhorting the Government to hang those who opposed it, I turned also against the Black Hundreds, which had grouped themselves into a society called "The Union of the Russian People." I could not tolerate seeing under this flag men who, while they represented my own ideas, thought only of their own skins—the aristocrats of aristocratic prerogatives, the land-owners of land monopoly, etc. Everywhere at the meetings of the Black Hundreds I denounced them, saying: "You believe in the autocracy only because you believe that the autocracy defends your interests. In religion you see only something that safeguards your interests. The church you forget; only when danger comes do you use it as a protection."

My activities had begun in 1905, when the Russian nation, disfranchised and enslaved, had risen against the autocratic system of government.

In my heart of hearts I, too, was an extreme revolutionist, a fact that is corroborated by the famous Russian authoress Gippius, who made me the hero of her novel "Czarevich Roman," under the name of Father Illarion. I had placed myself on the side of the reactionaries because the revolutionists had not inscribed upon their red flag the name of God. Had they added to the words, "In the struggle thou shalt attain thy rights," the words, "Thus saith the Lord of truth," the revolution would undoubtedly have found me in its foremost ranks. It is my profound conviction that the revolution of 1905 failed because

they did not do this. In their fight for a new and better Russia they did not take into consideration the religious spirit of the Russian people.

The sharpest of my attacks during the years 1906 and 1907 were directed against the landowners. I attacked them for their traitorous conduct in selling land to German colonists just because they came supplied with ready cash, and in refusing to sell it to the Russian peasants who were starving for the want of soil and who could pay for it only by instalments. These attacks of mine incensed the landowners, on the one hand, and the German faction at court, on the other. They were incensed at my audacity, but they did not know what to undertake against me, for the czar, backed by Rasputin, took my part. One of them, Senator Turav, who a few years later conducted the inquest into Stolypin's assassination, wrote me the following advice:

"Holy Father, preach to the people about heaven, but leave earthly affairs to us."

This is how I replied:

I shall not deprive you of your land, because I, as a monk, need little of it; just enough for a grave is all I want. But I come out against you because my God and Christ ordained me to establish the kingdom of heaven on earth; in other words, to strive for the kingdom of God for the rule of justice and humanity.

I added more oil to the flame of their wrath in the form of a booklet of mine entitled "The Vision of a Monk." In this booklet I addressed myself to the

reactionaries, and said to them in the most direct terms possible:

> You are swindlers. You side with the czar only because you desire to retain in your hands your land and your power. You are not worthy of standing under the banner of Russia. You desecrate it. You serve the devil and not God.

For having written this booklet I was nicknamed "The Fallen Hero."

But I went still further. In the Volhynian city of Zdolbunov I preached before an audience of many thousands, saying that the autocracy must heed the wisdom and will of the entire nation, and must not allow itself to be cared for and to be led by government officials only. I said that the bureaucrats were nothing but a parasitic growth on the body of autocracy, sucking out the sap from the rose. The czar is surrounded, I asserted, by thieves, grafters, and swindlers.

Now, Stolypin had been all his life long the spokesman of the landowners. As the leader of the reaction, accordingly, he led the attack against me. At this moment he directed Baron S——, governor of Volhynia, to examine me and demand an explanation for my "criminal" sermon. The governor asked me to call on him, and the following conversation ensued:

"Did you say that the czar is surrounded by thieves, grafters and swindlers?"

"I did, your Excellency."

"Are you absolutely certain about this?"

"Yes, I am absolutely certain about it."

"How can you know? Is it written on their foreheads?"

"No, it is not; but I know it, just the same. If you wish, I will enumerate the persons to you."

The governor looked at me savagely but said nothing. His silence was to be attributed to a very simple cause. The Senate had become active a short time before with an affair concerning the baron. This affair consisted of his having erased a figure in an official document in order to conceal the theft of thirty thousand rubles which he had appropriated from government funds. In addition, I knew that a court commandant D—— had stolen sixty-five thousand rubles given to him by Nicholas for the relief of the starving, and that Prince P—— had stolen seventy-two thousand rubles which the czarina had given him for the erection of a monastery at Peterhof.

In fine, my sermon on thieves, grafters, and swindlers had no lamentable consequences for me. But the whole story, especially the governor's admonition, aroused my anger, and I made up my mind to get even with the main culprit, Stolypin, at the very first opportunity. This opportunity came soon.

Stolypin assembled the landowners in Petrograd for a secret consultation, and said to them as follows: "Spread patriotic appeals among your peasants, and

if after that they still keep on rebelling and demanding land, well, I give my word I 'll shoot them all like so many dogs."

As soon as I found out about the secret consultation, I wrote and published a pamphlet entitled "A Lament on the Ruin of our Beloved Fatherland." Addressing Stolypin, I said:

> The peasants will not read your appeals, because they do not know how to read; you have not taught them to read and write. Feed the peasants, educate them, and then you will be able to sleep undisturbed and will not have to use cannon against your own people.

This was reported to the czar, and he gave his consent to have me removed from Volhynia. I was appointed a missionary to the city of Tsaritzin, on the Volga. Before leaving, however, I published the sermon which I had delivered at the Cathedral of Jitomir on February 2, 1908, saying, among other things: "Do penance! Do penance, ye landowners, ere it is too late! For if you do not repent, the Germans will invade Russia like birds of prey, and will peck out the bright eyes of the Russian people."

In the tumultuous commercial center of Tsaritzin I appeared before the common people crowned with the thorny wreath of a martyr. They flocked to me in great numbers. During the first summer alone they brought me several hundred thousand rubles. All this money I spent in the erection of a great monastery of which I shall have much more to say later in this book.

My enemies, meanwhile, attacked me on all sides. The high church officials, the civil officials, and the representatives of the revolutionary movement conducted a desperate campaign against me. The clergy investigated my pedigree and attempted to discover drunkards and madmen among my ancestors. The lay officials told the czar that another Pugatcheff had appeared in the Volga provinces as dangerous for him as the first Pugatcheff had been for Catherine II. The revolutionists published long articles about me, claiming that I had horns under my priest's cowl, hoofs instead of toes and heels, and a long tail under my cassock. In short, I was hated by all parties; but this only made me all the firmer in my convictions.

Nevertheless, this bitter political struggle came near unbalancing me. From the modest, unassuming monk that I had been three or four years before I was transformed into a monster of audacity. Speaking of certain governors and ministers whom I disliked, I used to state publicly that they ought to be flogged in the czar's stables. I accused bishops and priests without reservation of being mercenary and sinful. My adversaries declared that I was insane. I replied: "That is just what I expect. If you wish to kill a dog, call him mad." But my position was very exalted, for my power over the people was without limits.

As I have explained, surrounded by enemies on every side, I was all alone. But it was just then that

the most powerful man in Russia, Gregory Rasputin, came to my assistance. He came to me of his own accord because he needed a man who could support his authority and defend him against the attacks of public opinion outside of court circles. The reader knows how he had already given me assistance. But now, realizing the extent of my power, he made me his most intimate friend. Under his protection I had nothing to fear. Through him I began to influence the czar and czarina themselves.

In order to collect evidence against me, Stolypin ordered the Governor of Saratoff to send a detachment of police to my services. They were supposed to take reports on my sermons. It was a comical sight, I standing at the altar and preaching, the police standing at the entrance with copy-books in their hands, writing down everything I said. Afterward they would make out a detailed report of my sermon and submit it to the governor, the governor would send the report to Stolypin, Stolypin in turn would submit it to the procurator of the Holy Synod, and the latter would finally present it to the czar. A month after every sermon of mine I invariably received a ukase from the Holy Synod. Along with this, they always sent a copy of "my" sermon, which in reality was not mine at all; for it was changed to such an extent that I could not recognize it. And every ukase caustically forbade me ever again to deliver similar sermons, saying that they displeased the czar and czarina. I was beside myself with anger.

FATHER ILIODOR AND HIS DEVOTEES AT THE SHRINE OF SAINT SERAPHIM
Iliodor, dressed in white, can be seen facing the pilgrims, in front of the main entrance

But what could I do? There seemed to be no action that I could take against the perversions of the police.

It was then that I applied to Rasputin. I gave him a collection of sermons by Nikanor of Kherson saying, "Give this book to the czar and tell him that on such and such a day I will repeat word for word the sermon of Nikanor on Theater Performances during Lent."

Rasputin did as I had asked him, and on the day I had designated I read Nikanor's sermon. The police took it down as usual, and, as usual, their record did not in the least tally with what I had actually said. Stolypin went to the czar with my altered and distorted sermon. Nicholas read it, showed Stolypin the book I had submitted to him through Rasputin, and said:

"This is the sermon Iliodor delivered, not the report you brought me. The sermon you have brought me was composed by your policemen. Tell them not to pry into things that do not concern them."

After that I saw no more policemen at my services, but their places were taken by plainclothes-men and spies.

As ill luck would have it, shortly after my triumph over Stolypin I delivered a sermon in which I stated that God had given me the right to admonish not only Stolypin, but even the czar himself, if I thought that he did not act in accordance with God's will and the Holy Scriptures. This sermon very nearly caused my undoing. Stolypin went to see the czar about it,

and Nicholas ordered the Holy Synod to send me a telegram inquiring whether or not I had actually delivered the sermon. I replied that I had.

Immediately thereupon an order was issued to transfer me to Minsk. I stubbornly refused to obey. "I will not budge from Tsaritzin," I said. But authorities evicted me from my monastery and suspended all its activities.

There was only one thing left for me to do, to go to Petrograd in person and exculpate myself by declaring that I was in the right, having acted in accordance with God's word. But all my efforts were in vain; even God's word would not avail. Nobody listened to me, and the order "to Minsk" remained in force.

Again Rasputin came to my aid. He had just returned from a journey to Siberia. He proceeded to persuade the czar in his own way, without citing God's words, saying to him, "Return Iliodor to Tsaritzin."

"But how can I do this, since I have already given my consent for his transfer to Minsk? I even signed the order."

Rasputin replied:

"You are the czar. Act like one. You have given your word, but you can recall it. When you threw Iliodor to the dogs to be devoured by them, you signed your name like this—from left to right. All you have to do now is to sign it from right to left. Then you will have acted like a real czar."

Such was the report Rasputin gave me later.

After this piece of "enlightenment," Nicholas wrote Stolypin as follows:

"I permit Priest Iliodor to return to Tsaritzin on probation—for the last time."

"This order of the czar puts me at the mercy of the ministers," I said to Rasputin. "They will grasp this opportunity and devour me alive."

"Fear not," Rasputin answered. "They won't devour you. It was necessary to throw them a bone in order to silence them. Pity the czar. Do you think it is an easy task for him to quarrel with his ministers?"

These words calmed me.

It was just before this that Rasputin had arranged to have me presented to the czarina at Tsarskoe Selo. This, my first introduction to a member of the imperial family, occurred on April 3, 1909.

The czarina received me not at the imperial palace, but at the home of her intimate friend and lady-in-waiting, Anna Viroubova, who occupied an apartment at 2 Tzerkovnaia Street, Tsarskoe Selo, facing the palace and just outside the gates.

The appointment was for nine o'clock in the evening. I had arrived a little time before, Viroubova's house being Rasputin's headquarters at Tsarskoe Selo. Promply at nine the bell rang, and Viroubova herself ran to the door. Immediately afterward the czarina appeared, breathing hard, having evidently

hurried across from the palace. She was beautifully dressed, and wore over her shoulders a feather-trimmed cloak of the sort we call in Russia a *doushegreika,* or "soul-warmer."

I was shocked at her appearance. Instead of the delicate and majestic figure and the calm face that were familiar to me from photographs, I saw before me a woman who was plainly the victim of nervous maladies. She was in perpetual motion and seemed to be constantly grimacing; her whole manner was disjointed, and she spoke jerkily. I was surprised also to find that she spoke Russian with a strong German accent, so strong, indeed, that at first I could not understand what she was saying.

The czarina began by asking me a few perfunctory questions about myself. Then she passed immediately to my sermons, saying:

"You have insulted Governor Tatischev of Saratoff. You said in one of your sermons that he was no more of a Christian than a Tatar Khan. That is bad. You must not attack our ministers and governors. You must not. It is not right. They have enough to put up with in the attacks of our enemies. Our friends at least should not attack them."

In point of fact I had not attacked Governor Tatischev. It was my friend Bishop Hermogenes who had done this in a famous sermon the year before on the heir's name-day. But I did not wish to betray my friend; so I decided to accept the czarina's scolding without demur, imploring her, however, not

to rely on the bishops and the nobility, who had only their own interests in mind, but to build her own happiness on the happiness of the entire Russian people.

Then the czarina turned the conversation to Rasputin. "You listen to Father Gregory," she advised me. "He will lead you to the light. He is the greatest living ascetic. He keeps meditating all the time over the welfare of Russia. A saint he is, a great prophet."

At the close of our conversation the czarina asked me to sign a pledge never again to attack the ministers and the Government. Viroubova brought paper and ink. What could I do? I would have signed anything that would have permitted me to remain at Tsaritzin and continue my work among my own people. I saw no way to avoid it, but as I signed the pledge I prayed Heaven to bear witness that it was against my conscience and that I could never carry out my promise.

My life returned to its normal current. As soon as I returned to Tsaritzin I went on as before with my attacks upon the corrupt bureaucrats, still hoping that the autocracy would take the side of the people against them. Several times I received reminders from Tsarskoe Selo about my promise, but I gave them no heed, and at last the catastrophe came. Ten months after the czar had countermanded the order transferring me to Minsk, Stolypin and the Holy Synod, enraged beyond measure by this victory of mine, and fearing lest I organize a peasant rebellion

on the Volga, succeeded in convincing the czar that I must be removed from Tsaritzin without fail. Nicholas gave his consent, insisting, however, that my dignity should not be infringed upon and that I should be transferred to another post, out of harm's way, but of equal importance. The Holy Synod accordingly appointed me father superior of the Novosil monastery in the Government of Tula.

Such was the decision of the Holy Synod, but by no means mine. I made up my mind that nothing in the world would make me leave Tsaritzin, for I knew that I could accomplish much more, and with more success awaken the consciousness of the people, by putting an end to my incessant wanderings back and forth and remaining in the one spot where I had established myself.

At this moment Rasputin was away on a pilgrimage at Jerusalem. Nevertheless, not wishing to let slip the big fish he had accidentally caught, and at the same time evidently believing that it would not be a bad thing for me to go to Novosil for a while, he sent word to the czar to have me admonished by a member of the Holy Synod. Bishop Parthenius of Tula was accordingly delegated for this purpose, and came to see me, for I was in Petrograd at the time. When he began lecturing me I interrupted him, saying:

"You members of the Synod have one master only; it is the chief of police, Stolypin." Parthenius was highly offended and immediately left. Then the czar

sent his aide-de-camp Mandrika, who came in pomp, accompanied by the vice-director of the police department and the vice-governor of Saratoff, all in full uniform and covered with medals and ribbons. Standing before me, very straight and speaking in a loud, bullying voice, Mandrika announced:

"I come to transmit to you the wish of his Imperial Majesty, the Autocrat of All the Russias. It is the wish of his Imperial Majesty that you leave Tsaritzin for Novasil."

I replied that I was ready and willing to obey the czar, but not the wish of Stolypin, and that I would show Stolypin that he could not have his own way in church affairs, as he did in the affairs of the police department.

That very day, ignoring the order of the Holy Synod, I took the train to Tsaritzin. Upon my arrival, officials boarded the train and ordered me to return at once to the post designated by the czar. I refused to leave my carriage, knowing that, as I was a man of importance, they could not use force upon me. Their next move was to detach my car from the rest of the train, asking all the other passengers to leave, and then to attach a locomotive to it to take me to the new destination. When I discovered this I said, "You will never take me to that place alive," and I immediately began a hunger strike. For two days they carried me in different directions, while I refused to take any nourishment, asking only for a priest for absolution. At this the officials in charge

of my transfer became alarmed and decided to take me to my superior, Bishop Hermogenes, whom I loved and admired greatly. I decided for the moment to follow his paternal advice, which was that I should obey the czar and go where he was sending me. I accordingly surrendered, and went with the police to Novosil.

But a few days at this monastery convinced me that I should never be able to develop a work there. I was surrounded by secret-service agents whose duty it was to watch me and who, in order to divert my suspicion, actually came to me asking for absolution. Besides, I kept thinking of my people in Tsaritzin like abandoned little children weeping for their father. I decided to escape and return to them.

Two days prior to my flight I received a visit from the famous Mme. Lochtina, friend of the czar and the czarina. She told the members of the monastery and the detectives that I was in a very delicate state of health and that my surroundings must be changed at once. I was, therefore, permitted to go to a small country place belonging to the monastery. On the journey I found a favorable opportunity to change my dress and, with the assistance of Lochtina, robed myself as a simple peasant. We made our way to Moscow, and on arriving there, stopped at the house of some friends of Lochtina. Now, unfortunately, there were two students in this house who recognized me and, wishing to create a sensation, sent an article

THE OLD MONASTERY AT TSARITZIN
In 1907, before Iliodor became abbot

THE NEW MONASTERY AT TSARITZIN
Erected by Iliodor in 1909

to the paper announcing my presence in Moscow. The cat was out of the bag, but before the police had a chance to seize me I was off and away.

Then the governor of Moscow sent a telegram to Stolypin saying that I was on the way to Tsaritzin, and asking what he should do. Stolypin wired to General Kirsanoff, chief of police in Voronech, to mobilize all his forces to take me as I passed through the town. The wife of the general, however, being a very religious woman and taking pity on me as a priest, prevailed on her husband not to stop my train, saying to him: "This man has done no harm. He is only going back to his beloved people." In consequence of this Kirsanoff lost his position as chief of police.

About a hundred versts from Tsaritzin my brother, to whom I had telegraphed from Moscow, came aboard the train. We planned that, in case a search of the train was made, I should impersonate a sick man on his way to the Caucasus, and my brother would be the physician. About twenty-five versts from Tsaritzin the train stopped, and a whole squad of policemen, accompanied by detectives, entered the train. They knocked at the door of my compartment, and my brother opened the door on the chain. When the chief of police asked him who his companion was, my brother replied:

"It is a patient of mine whom I am taking to the Caucasus for a cure." But there was no deceiving the chief.

"We have information that this sick man is none other than Father Iliodor," he said.

I was accordingly removed from the train. They told me that I could not go to Tsaritzin, and asked me where else I would like to go. I asked to be taken to a little village about fifteen miles from Tsaritzin, where the head of the church, Father Michael Egorov, was a friend of mine. To this they consented. We arrived at four o'clock in the morning, and I was allowed to proceed to the church.

In the meantime the people, learning of my arrival, flocked in in great numbers from Tsaritzin. The ministers in Petrograd having insisted that every care should be taken to prevent me from proceeding to Tsaritzin, the lieutenant-governor mobilized fourteen hundred men to guard the road. The little house near the church was surrounded by secret-police agents. After prayer in the church, I started for this little house, and what saved me from immediate capture was one of those trifling incidents that often have important consequences. From the cloudy, early morning sky the sun suddenly came out, and as it was quite cold, the police went into the sunshine to warm themselves. Now, standing near the house there was a wagon with a large body. Unobserved by the police, I directed that this wagon should be drawn a little nearer the house, and that several women should take all their belongings and sit in the wagon. They seated themselves, four on each side, leaving a long, narrow space between. In this I

quickly concealed myself, while the women covered me with their wraps. I then instructed them to drive off, and we proceeded along a road guarded by the soldiers who had been told off against my possible escape. We covered the fifteen miles between the little village church and Tsaritzin without any accident, and safely reached Tsaritzin without my absence from the crowd being observed. I immediately entered the chapel of the monastery.

As soon as the guards discovered that I had deceived them, they began flocking into the chapel. But so great was their astonishment that they refused to believe that I was really Father Iliodor in person, and in order to convince themselves that I was not a spirit began asking me for absolution. It is the custom, after confession, for the priest to bless the penitent, who kisses the hand of the priest. One of these policemen, having made his confession, bit my outstretched hand, and thus made sure that I was really human flesh and blood.

Now, in the anticipation that the struggle with my enemies would end in violence, I had had my monastery constructed on the principle of a great fortress. The doors were heavily armored. Three thousand workmen had volunteered their services without pay, and the building had been erected in one year. This would not have been possible except through volunteer service. For instance, about five hundred poods—a pood is equal to thirty-six pounds avoirdupois—of iron was needed to cover the roof,

and this I had asked the people to get. The following day they brought seven hundred poods. The total cost of the monastery was seven hundred thousand rubles. My enemies, not wishing to see me gain a foothold anywhere, had refused to approve the plans which I had to present prior to construction, and when the ministers heard that I had decided to go on with the work on my own account, they sent a commission composed of four men, all architects and engineers, endeavoring to prove that I was putting up a building that would be a menace to those who dwelt within it, the construction being faulty. Learning of the expected visit of this commission, I had sent a telegram to the governor saying, "I will not defend your commission against the thousands of stones which the people will throw at them." The commission never came. The monastery was built. It is considered the chief glory of Tsaritzin, and stands to-day as powerful as ever.

In my anticipation that this monastery would be a rock on which I might stand against my enemies I had not been mistaken. For twenty days Stolypin's force now besieged it, the people having crowded within the walls to protect and defend me. The soldiers planned to break the roof of the monastery and then to take me, surrounded by Cossacks, to the special train that was kept standing all the time under steam at a station eight miles distant from Tsaritzin, ready to leave as soon as I had been captured. Every day and every night Stolypin wired to the commander

GRAVE OF ONE OF FATHER ILIODOR'S FOLLOWERS AT THE TSARITZIN MONASTERY WHO DIED DURING THE SIEGE
It is a Russian custom at Easter to place an egg upon graves in commemoration of the dead. Easter occurred just after the siege was lifted. Fifteen thousand eggs were deposited upon this grave

of the besieging force, asking how things stood, and he invariably received the same answer, "The people are in our way."

Meanwhile Rasputin wrote to Nicholas from Jerusalem, "It is my wish that Iliodor remain in Tsaritzin."

Precisely twenty days after the siege of my monastery had begun, therefore, the following telegram arrived from Metropolitan Anthony of the Holy Synod:

> In consideration of the petitions submitted by the people, the czar condescends to permit the priest Iliodor to return from Novosil to Tsaritzin.
>
> ANTHONY, METROPOLITAN.

This happened on April 3, 1911. At the beginning of May, Rasputin returned from the Holy Land, and immediately thereupon issued an order for the dismissal of Lukjanov, procurator of the Holy Synod, and Premier Stolypin, the two main instigators of the Tsaritzin scandal. Lukjanov was dismissed at once, and as for Stolypin, he lasted until the first of September, when the bullet of the Jew Dmitri Bogrov compelled him to retire forever.

I did not at first know that Rasputin had come to my rescue. I was under the impression that the czar had actually been influenced by the people's prayers. Two months later the "saint" explained to me the real aspect of the matter. I could scarcely believe him, but a scandal he made at my monastery con-

vinced me that he really had been instrumental in my second return to Tsaritzin. A teacher from Ural, who had come on a pilgrimage, and of whom my reader will hear more anon, arranged a little reception for the "saint" and me, inviting among others Mme. Lochtina, and my brother Michael, who was then visiting me and who already regarded Rasputin with suspicion on account of his kissing and touching women. When the conversation turned on my return to Tsaritzin, Lochtina and Gregory both stated in the most emphatic manner that it was due to the "saint's" telegram from Jerusalem. Whereupon my brother Michael, whose manner is exceedingly direct, knocked his fist on the table and exclaimed:

"You are all liars. It was not Gregory who returned Iliodor. It was the people who protected him." Immediately Rasputin began to act like a madman. He snorted, spat, threw his napkin under the table, and ran out of the room.

A month and a half after my great victory the czar decided to receive me. Up to this time my communication with him had been through letters and telegrams. The court clique had urged him not to see me in person, lest by so doing he should raise me in the estimation of the masses. But Nicholas would listen to no one but Rasputin. He decided to grant me an audience.

I received a card from Count Fredericks, master of ceremonies, to the court, now in prison, notifying me that the czar would receive me on the afternoon

of May 21, 1911, at five o'clock. This was followed by instructions from the chief procurator of the Holy Synod as to the manner in which I was to conduct myself in the czar's presence. It was expected that I should ask no questions and make no suggestions, but simply listen to what the czar said to me.

When I stepped off the train at Tsarskoe Selo I found twenty or thirty officers stationed along the platform. None of them greeted me; they appeared not to know me. In reality their eyes were fixed upon me and upon the imperial carriage that stood at the curb. As nobody addressed me, I approached the carriage somewhat hesitatingly. At the sight of me, however, the footman sprang from his place, saluted me, and opened the door. I stepped in, and the door was closed behind me. I looked out of the carriage window and observed half a dozen men in civilian clothes loitering about, their eyes fixed on the carriage with the imperial coat of arms. They were spies from the Fourth Section. The sight of these foxlike faces smelling after me filled me with pity for the czar.

And here let me tell a little incident connected with my visit to Nicholas that may interest my readers. Some time before my struggle at Tsaritzin I was making a pilgrimage from one monastery to another. The distance I had to cover was about thirty miles. Half-way there my feet became inflamed from walking, and I needed a little cane to support me, but had no pocket-knife to cut a stick. Just at this time I

met an old man accompanied by a little girl of fifteen, also on a pilgrimage, both of whom had sticks. I accosted the old man, saying:

"Grandfather, will you not let me have your stick? My feet are so swollen that it is hard for me to walk."

"How do you expect me to walk without a stick?" he said.

"But you can cut one," I replied. Then the little girl said:

"Little Father, take my stick." I accepted it, saying: "Thank you. Here is a ruble" [equivalent to 51.5 cents].

The old man pushed the little girl back, exclaiming:

"That one 's no good. I will sell you mine for twenty copeks." [The copek is worth about half a cent.]

The little girl refused to accept the ruble, so I said to her, "Just because you have refused to accept one ruble I shall give you two," and I went on my way. The stick was nothing but a broken branch from a tree, and not too straight, but believing that, as it was given to me from a generous and pure heart, it would be a talisman, I carried it everywhere. When I received news that the czar wished to see me, I decided to take the little stick with me. Now, on my arrival at the palace the lackeys looked at it curiously, as though it were something very precious. Doubtless such a thing had never been seen there before. The czar's palace, I must tell the reader, is

CELEBRATION OF ALEXANDER NEVSKY DAY AT TSARITZIN MONASTERY
Iliodor blessing 50,000 ikons given by Czarina Alexandra, May, 1911

extremely long, and going and coming I was conducted the entire length. And hear what happened to my stick. At the last moment, as I was taking my leave, I remembered that I had left it in the czar's reception room. I asked one of the servants to fetch it for me. From my waiting-place at the left entrance I could observe two servants with the utmost dignity carrying this much-glorified stick the whole distance from the opposite end of the palace.

But to return to my story. The czar had a favorite pose in which he received visitors. He stood beside a cabinet, looking out of the window into the garden. As I entered his "work-room" he turned and stepped toward me. I, being a priest, he kissed my hand, and I kissed his.

The czar seemed to me a man without a tongue, weak and nervous. He could scarcely articulate; his voice was uncertain and muffled, and had a sepulchral sound. His eyes were dull, misty and filled with tears.

Stammering and stuttering, he asked me:

"Why do you attack my ministers?"

"Because they deserve it."

"Don't attack them;—attack the revolutionists and the Jews."

"They are all guilty."

"Of course; but do not attack my ministers. They have enough enemies as it is."

Then the czar inquired about my work at Tsaritzin and asked if there was anything I desired of him

either for myself or for my friends. I asked him to take away from the Don Kalmucks and give to the Cossacks a certain well which, according to an old legend, had been dug out by the Slavonic saints Cyril and Methodius. I told him of a monastery the construction of which was being held up for lack of funds. Then I mentioned the names of several men who, I thought, were deserving of higher places.

Shaking his left arm convulsively all the time, as if it were not his own, Nicholas made one and the same answer to all my petitions.

"Yes; very well. I 'll do everything. Leave me the addresses of your friends."

And right there in his chamber I wrote down the addresses and made a note of the location of the well, thinking meanwhile to myself, "Nicholas will not keep any of his promises." And I guessed right. He did not keep one.

Before taking leave of the czar I begged him to let me see the heir apparent. My request was complied with.

The czarevitch did not exactly walk into the room where I was waiting for him; he was pushed in. It was his older sister, the Grand Duchess Olga, who pushed him in with her knee. When she pushed him close enough to me, I said:

"How are you, your Highness?"

He made no reply, but tried his best to hide behind his sister's skirt. He wore a plain white suit

and was barefooted. His feet and hands were covered with sand. His knickerbockers were soiled.

I asked him another question:

"Your Highness, I have many little friends in Tsaritzin. What shall I tell them in your name?"

Aliosha still hid himself behind his sister's skirt, and she began to disentangle him from the folds of her dress. While doing this she prompted him to answer me, "Give my greetings to them." Then he held out his hand to me, quickly repeated "Greetings," and ran out of the room. He was then eight years of age.

As I was going out I was informed that the czar desired me to conduct a service at seven o'clock in the chapel connected with the palace. It was Saturday, and evening was already falling. I was taken directly to the chapel, where I found the whole court assembled.

I went at once to the altar. My interview had not left me with a light heart, and in my depressed imagination the courtiers, in their gold-embroidered uniforms covered with decorations, appeared to me in some way like demons. One of these approached me and said with great severity, "Be very sure in your sermon not to lecture the czar." I made a deep obeisance, remembering the words of the Gospel, to be "wise as the serpent and innocent as the dove." Barely had I time to take three steps when another courtier emerged from the brilliant assemblage, say-

ing, "If you read your sermon, do not gesticulate." I bowed still lower. As I entered the altar, a third—it was the Grand Duke John Konstantinovich said—"Remember that, according to the court etiquette, no priest is expected to preach longer than seven minutes." Upon this I made a profound obeisance, almost touching my forehead to the floor, and silently prayed to God for divine help against these demons.

Then the czar entered, surrounded by his entourage. My sermon lasted seventeen minutes. After the sermon I escorted the czar out of the chapel. He took my hand and said, "It was a great joy to pray to the Lord under your guidance." And this, I was told, was what he said to the officers the next day at luncheon: "Iliodor spoke rather a long time, but had he spoken for another hour it would still have given me great pleasure to listen to him."

The courtiers who had heard my sermon told me after the service: "We trembled all the time you spoke."

"Why?" I asked.

"When you began to speak of royal palaces we feared you were going to censure the czar."

Perhaps it will be in place to quote here a few passages from this "terrible" sermon of mine. I said in part as follows:

Where art Thou, O Lord? Where art Thou?

I shall rise above the earth on the wings of my spirit, I shall descend to the depths of the ocean, I shall penetrate into the bowels of the earth in quest of Thee, O God. I see

how men who surpass wild beasts in cruelty murder one another in their madness. And on account of this struggle the earth feeds itself on human flesh, and the rivers flow to the brim with human blood.

Where art Thou, O Lord? Where art Thou?

I enter the lonely cottages of the poor, and there I find Thee not. Only despair prevails there. Embittered are the hearts of the hut-dwellers, and a muffled cry for help escapes from their lips and rises up to heaven. I behold the splendid chambers of the rich and powerful, but even there I find not the promised rest. Their bellies are full, but their souls starve. And that is why the hearts of the rich and the powerful are deaf to the sufferings of their fellow-men. They devote extraordinary attention to their pet dogs, but they treat with indifference the poor who beg at their windows. Gold glitters there and offers its owners pleasure. And, blinded by the gold, they see not that it is not the gold that glitters, but the tears of the poor seamstress who sits at her work from early in the morning till late at night and longs for the green meadows, for the sun, for the woods.

Where art Thou, O Lord? Where art Thou?

Finally I ascend to the palaces of the earthly rulers, the czars and the kings. And, lo! even there I find no happiness, no peace, no rest. The czars are beset with cares as numerous as the billows of the ocean. The czars have as many enemies as there are devils in hell. The czar's own bodyguards are often their assassins. And what about intrigues, the court intrigues? Ah, is their life not like that of one in a damp cellar full of venomous and abhorrent vermin?

Where art Thou, O Lord? Where art Thou?

And God's voice replies to our conscience, saying: "I am with you. I have always been with you, I am with you now, and I shall be with you forever. I am near you, and I knock at the doors of your heart. But you open them not. You have hung on your hearts locks of cruelty, malice, greediness,

selfishness, and violence. You run hither and thither. You seek me in various ways, but you find me not in the right manner, in the right place. I am good and modest. I am selfless. I am poor. I am—Love."

Even while I was preaching there began to pass through my mind another sermon wholly unlike this one. Standing in the middle of the church, I observed Nicholas, whose back was turned toward me. I contemplated his short, sunburned neck; his small head, with its closely cropped hair; his narrow shoulders; his small, awkward figure, his red coat with its epaulets; and his large military boots. I looked at him, and I thought: "Is this the ruler over one hundred and eighty million human beings? Is it really possible that this little man is the czar of the greatest empire in the world? No; it is unthinkable."

And I turned around and beheld a group of gorgeously attired courtiers, all in orders, with proud chests, tall of stature, well fed, with strange, unnatural expressions in their eyes. I looked at them and thought: "They are the actual rulers, the real czars of the Russian people; not any of them alone but all together. They constitute the power that lords it over the many millions of the Russian people. Their collective mind, their collective will, is the real autocrat of the great Russian Empire. As for Nicholas, he is only a puppet, a figurehead that the church has placed on a pedestal of divine greatness in order to make the people fear and obey the powers that be."

Wrath against Nicholas kindled in my soul, and

then I began to pity him. I recollected what Rasputin had told me about the czar's life, and what his ministers had told me, and at once the czar's burdensome loneliness and powerlessness became clear to me. I recalled through how many empty roads and iron gates guarded by soldiers I had been conducted to him. I saw with what expressions of fear the soldiers in the church looked at him. I watched the flashing glances of the courtiers in which lurked pride, fear, and flattery. And I thought: "The czar never sees a simple, candid glance. Is it to be wondered at, therefore, that ordinary peasants like Rasputin and the other 'saints' of the court overpower him with their foolish, but frank and candid, words, and influence him in such an astonishing way?"

Five days after my audience with the czar and the sermon I delivered in his chapel Nicholas issued an imperial decree ordering my promotion to the rank of archimandrite, or head of a monastery from the ranks of which all bishops are selected.

Nicholas issued the decree, and the newspapers, with imperial sanction, announced it. And Bishop Hermogenes, my greatly loved superior, congratulated me upon the monarch's grace. But I never received the reward. To answer that question is to tell the whole story of my relations with Rasputin. The saint gave and the saint took away. And the reason was very simple. Having come to visit me at Tsaritzin late in June, as I shall tell more in detail in the second part of this book, Rasputin observed that

I had become, as indeed I had and for the best of reasons, "irreverent" to his high position. He observed it, I say, and this is what he wrote in consequence to the imperial family:

"Darling Papa and Mama, Iliodorushka has got rather spoiled. He does n't obey. Take your time about the miter for him. Let it go. We 'll see afterward. He would be all right, but he obeys Hermogenes. We must be careful.

This was taken from Lochtina's diaries.

But in order to explain all this I must go back and tell my readers how my connection with Rasputin began. I must say something about his early life and show how he attained his unrivaled power over the destinies of Russia; and in order to do this I must describe in some detail the corruption of the imperial court. Then my reader will see how inevitable it was that I became the bitterest enemy of Rasputin, and why I fell from power and was obliged to flee for my life.

PART II

RASPUTIN, UNOFFICIAL CZAR OF RUSSIA

CHAPTER I

MY ACQUAINTANCE WITH RASPUTIN

In November or December, 1902, when I, then a student of the Petrograd Theological Academy, was zealously preparing myself to take the habit, a rumor became current among the students that somewhere in Siberia, in the governments of Tomsk and Tobolsk, there had appeared a great prophet, clairvoyant, miracle-worker, and ascetic by the name of Gregory.

The discussions regarding the new prophet were many and varied. In the students' circles grouped around that true ascetic, the inspector of the academy, Archimandrite Theophanes, nothing definite was said, but all the talks of the unsophisticated youths revealed an unaccountable veneration for the unknown saint. I was too busy to pay much attention to these rumors, but there were moments when the thought of the new wonder-worker would become predominant in my mind. My interest was excited by the speeches of my spiritual adviser and initiator into monastic life, Father Theophanes. On one occasion, while we were sitting in his apartment drinking tea and conversing about religious matters, Father Theophanes happened to mention "God's man, Gregory."

"Yes," said he, "God's men still exist on earth.

To this day our Holy Russia abounds in saints. God sends consolation to His people from time to time in the guise of righteous men, and they are the mainstays of Holy Russia."

I recollect that I, who usually listened eagerly to every word of my tutor Theophanes, pricked up my ears when he began to speak of contemporary godly men.

"At present God is sending such a man from distant Siberia. Lately a certain eminent archimandrite arrived from there and said that in the government of Tobolsk, in the village of Poksrovskoye, there dwell three devout brothers, Elias, Nicholas, and Gregory. Gregory is the eldest, and the first two are his pupils, not having as yet attained the highest stage of moral perfection. The three brothers sat once in a peasant's cottage grieving that God would not send His blessed rain upon the earth. Gregory left the table and prayed for a moment. Then he said firmly, 'There will be no rain for three months to come, till the very Feast of the Intercession of the Holy Virgin.' And so it happened. There was no rain, and the bad crops made the people sorrowful. Lord! Lord!" concluded Father Theophanes, with a deep sigh.

His words filled me with emotion. I was penetrated with a desire to see the godly man and reveal to him the worst and the best of my innermost being. I could not restrain myself, and asked my spiritual father:

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GREGORY RASPUTIN
(About 1902)

"Is the saint coming here?"

"He is, he is. A certain archimandrite has promised to bring him. We expect him."

Months passed. I was busy with my affairs and had no opportunity to hear what was spoken of the saint. In the Lent of 1903, the chief of the Korean Mission, Archimandrite Chrisanthes Schetkivsky, who died three years later as the bishop of Elizabethgrad, came from Siberia to the academy. Throughout the academy rumors became current that the archimandrite had brought to Petrograd the great saint Gregory, that Gregory had already paid a visit to the rector, Bishop Sergius Stragorodsky, and that a few students had seen him and had their fortunes read. These rumors upset me, and I began zealously to search in every nook and corner of the academy in the hope of seeing the godly man. I did not succeed, and the question why I solved in a very plain, rapid monastic manner, "I am unworthy."

On November 29, 1903, I took the habit. They changed my name from Sergius to Iliodor. On December 16 of the same year I was passing through the dimly lighted academy hallway with lowered eyes, as became a new monk, according to the teachings of the holy fathers, when suddenly somebody very softly tapped me on the shoulder. I raised my eyes and saw Father Theophanes, with an unpleasantly simpering peasant beside him.

"This is Father Gregory from Siberia," shyly remarked Theophanes, pointing to the peasant, who

was treading with his feet on one spot as if on the point of darting off in a wild gallop.

"Ah, ah, ah," I stammered in embarrassment, holding out my hand to the peasant. We kissed each other.

Gregory was dressed in a cheap, greasy, gray coat the skirts of which bulged out in front like two old leather mittens. His pockets were inflated like those of a beggar who deposits therein any eatables that are given to him. His trousers, no less shabby than the coat, hung down over the coarse legs of his peasant boots, abundantly blackened with tar, and the seat of his trousers flapped like a torn old hammock. The hair on the saint's head was roughly combed in one direction; his beard looked like a piece of sheepskin pasted to his face to complete its repulsive ugliness. His hands were pock-marked and unclean, and there was much dirt under his long and somewhat turned-in nails. His entire body emitted an indeterminate, disagreeable smell.

Gregory, having kissed me, surveyed me fixedly with his eyes, then moved his thick, blue, sensual lips, from which his mustache protruded like two worn-out brushes, slapped my shoulder with one hand, keeping the fingers of the other at his mouth, and addressing Theophanes with a kind of ingratiating, unnatural smile, remarked:

"He prays well, very well."

Theophanes then took his arm, and they went to the inspector's apartments, while I, amazed by the

unexpected meeting with the celebrated prophet, returned to my humble cell. On the way there and while in the cell I kept thinking: "So this is what he is like, the saint. So this is the prophet. How dirty he is! But our Lord Christ and the apostles and the ascetics had no external splendor, and dwelt in poverty. Begone, Satan! Leave me alone! I have hardly had time to meet a saintly man, and you are here as if I had sent for you. The accursed enemy endeavors to make the saint repulsive to me." And to make up for my sinful thoughts, I made thirty genuflections, and continued thinking about the prophet until the devil seemed to have left me alone and vexed me no longer.

Thus began my fateful acquaintance with Rasputin.

The year 1904 arrived. In January, Antonius, Archbishop of Volhynia, came to Petrograd. As he was considered a great friend and patron of monkhood, they took me, a young man unacquainted with the distinguished bishop, to his apartments at the monastery for a visit. There I saw a large crowd of people of different ranks and professions. They all attentively listened to Antonius. In the course of the conversation, Gregory Rasputin was mentioned. Much was spoken about him. Antonius said:

"Don't believe him. He's an imposter; think of his doings in Kazan. A man of his type cannot possibly be a saint."

As I knew Antonius was a man fond of talking scandal, what he said about Rasputin passed out of my mind.

In May, 1904, I was passing through the upper story of the academy building, going along the hall from a cell adjacent to the altar, when from another cell just over the staircase a peasant jumped out in the strangest fashion, as if crouching. The odd creature ran down-stairs, touching the walls in a curious way with his outspread fingers. While running he seemed to be making queer leaps, trying, like a satyr, to keep his heels in front of his body. The peasant seemed rather suspicious to me, but at the same time somehow familiar. The thought possessed me that I had seen him somewhere—his clotty beard, his gray, turbid eyes, the flapping seat of his trousers. Unable to contain myself any longer, I asked the monk from whose cell he had dived out:

"It 's the celebrated saint Gregory," was the answer.

At Easter, 1905, I, then a senior in the academy, went in to see Father Theophanes. On the bureau at which Theophanes used to write I perceived a costly ikon, "The Resurrection of Christ." Theophanes, pointing to the ikon, said:

"This was sent to me a while ago by the Grand Duchess Militza Nicolaïevna and her husband Peter Nicolaïevitch. I visited them today with the venerable Gregory."

I made ready to listen to what Theophanes had to

tell about the saint, having heard nothing about him in a long while. We sat down to tea. Theophanes continued:

"Many a time the saint and I have visited the czar and especially the czarina. There 's a godly man. Even his speech is different from our simple talk. Once the czar, the czarina with the heir apparent on her arms, he, and I sat down in the palace dining-room. We were talking about the political situation in Russia. Suddenly Gregory jumped up, knocked his fist on the table, and stared straight at the czar. The czar was startled, I was frightened, the czarina got up, the heir apparent burst out crying, and the venerable man asked the czar:

" 'Where do you feel a throbbing, here or there?' pointing with his finger first to his forehead and then to his heart. The czar replied, pointing to his heart:

" 'Here. My heart is beating fast.' 'Good!' exclaimed the saint. When you are about to do something for Russia, consult your heart, and not your brain. The heart is more certain than the brain.'

"The czar said, 'Excellent!' and the czarina kissed Gregory's hand and said, 'Thanks; thanks, teacher.' "

In March, 1909, at the request of Count Tatischev, governor of Saratoff, and with the approval of the czar and the Holy Synod, Premier Stolypin, as I have related in an earlier chapter of this book, ordered that I should be transferred from Tsaritzin to Minsk. I went to Petrograd instead of Minsk to ask Bishop Theophanes, who had been promoted to

the rectorship of the academy, to ask him to intercede with the czar in my behalf. I arrived in the morning of the day before Easter. Theophanes refused to present my petition on the pretext that it was dangerous to abuse one's privileges too often. His answer discouraged me. I sat at the table, not knowing what to do. Theophanes sat opposite me and also held his peace, as if annoyed by my presence.

Suddenly the bell rang in the antechamber. In less than a minute a man came into the dining-room where we were sitting; he came in jumping, with queer leaps and grimaces, reminding me of the toy man that begins to jerk his feet, hands, and head simultaneously when one pulls the string that connects all the parts of his figure. He was elaborately dressed, wearing a crimson-colored Russian shirt, a belt with big silk tassels, and tightly fitting trousers of expensive black cloth. His costly patent-leather boots were highly polished. First greeting Theophanes, he turned to me and began to kiss me, saying:

"Well, how are you? How are you, darling? Don't worry; everything will turn out all right."

It was Gregory Rasputin. Evidently he already knew that I had been transferred to Minsk, and that I did not wish to go there, and had come to Petrograd to urge my case.

Gregory sat down near me, opposite Theophanes. They looked at each other, but neither spoke. It was evident that some misunderstanding had arisen be-

tween them. I learned later that it was due to Gregory's activities in "curing" women and innocent girls of a loving disposition. They had told Theophanes about it in confession, and he had insisted that Gregory abandon his abominable practices. Gregory had objected, and a deadly combat had started between them. They continued on speaking terms only in the hope that they might arrive at a sufficient understanding to be able to resume visiting the imperial family together. Gregory, however, seeing that he was certain to lose the friendship of Theophanes, was seeking new friends among the prominent representatives of the clergy, whom he needed in order to reassure Nicholas and Alexandra during the attacks of his enemies. It was at the most opportune moment for him that Gregory caught me in his net.

Having noticed that Theophanes did not wish to speak to him, Rasputin turned to me, slapped my shoulder, and inquired:

"Well, my friend, why so down-hearted, eh? You would like to go back to Tsaritzin, would n't you?"

"I should like to very much indeed," I answered. "All my life is there. What shall I be able to accomplish if they keep chasing me like a dog from one place to another?"

Theophanes availed himself of the opportunity and hastily left the room. Gregory and I remained alone.

"Very well, very well, darling," he continued; "you shall return to Tsaritzin."

"When? In ten years, when weeds are growing on the grave of my sacred task?"

"No, no; it will happen soon. You will leave here in about three days, and not for Minsk, but for your present home."

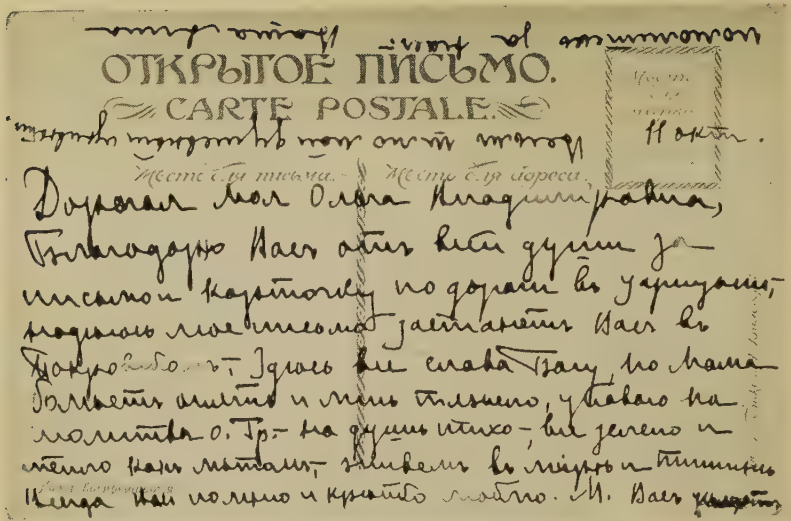
"How so? The attorney-procurator told me that the czar, at Stolypin's instigation, had twice signed an order banishing me from Tsaritzin."

"Twice! twice! That means nothing to me. You shall go back to Tsaritzin, understand? Don't worry in vain, and remember Gregory. But there is one thing you must know: one must not expose the czar and the Government nowadays, as Philip of Moscow used to do. The times are different, my friend."

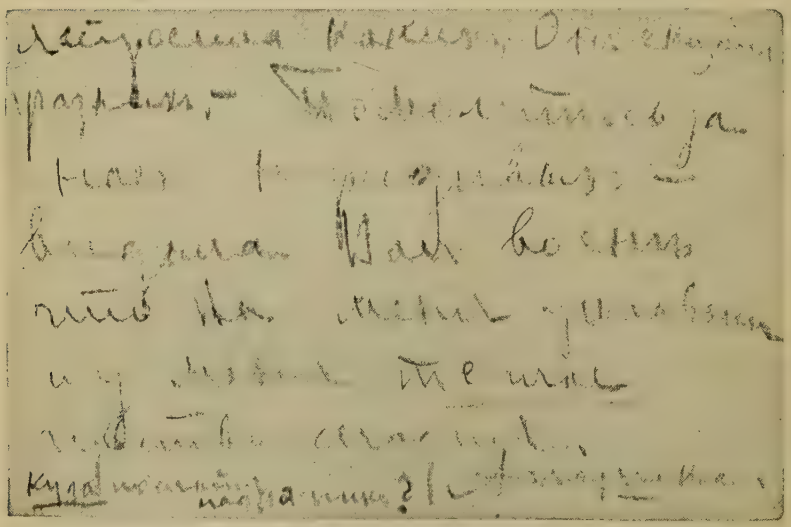
Rasputin's words sounded like a reply to my sermon in Tsaritzin on Palm Sunday, when I had said that it was the duty of the priests to unmask all sinners, no matter how high their station in life. I was surprised. "Indeed," I thought, "Rasputin must be very clever."

Gregory rose to leave. I also rose and made him a low bow. Had any one suggested that I should prostrate myself at Gregory's feet and kiss them, I should have done so without stopping to think. I felt that he was bringing me back to life by the favor that he was doing to me and to the thousands of common people who, with tears in their eyes, had seen me leave Tsaritzin for Petrograd.

During the Easter matins in the seminary church,


ОТКРЫТОЕ ПИСЬМО.
CARTE POSTALE.
11 окт.
Место для письма. Место для адреса.
Дорогая моя Ольга Владимировна,
Благодарю Вас опять всей душой за
письмо и карточку, но досады на удивление,
подолью масла письмом заставляет Вас в
дождь бегать. Здесь все слава Богу, но мама
болеет ангиной и мне тяжело, что нет на
молитве о. Гр- на душе тихо-, все зелено и
тепло наши мальчики, живем в лесу и птички
Христа ради молчим и крепко любим. М. Вас

POSTCARD WRITTEN BY ANNA VIROUBOVA



POSTCARD OF ANNA VIROUBOVA
Signed: "Annushka"

Gregory came over to me near the altar, kissed me, and said: "You will get a letter from Tsarskoe Selo to-morrow. When you are presented to the czarina, tell her and Viroubova that they should not run away from matins, but that they should remain for mass, too. But do not speak harshly and loudly; you may frighten them."

On the second day of Easter week, having learned that Rasputin was in the apartments of Sergius, Archbishop of Finland, I rang him up on the telephone, burning with impatience to know how matters stood regarding my return to Tsaritzin. Sergius himself answered the telephone. To my question, "May I speak to Gregory Ephimovitch?" he answered, "He is reposing." His words embarrassed me considerably. He 's a cunning blade, is Rasputin," I said to myself, "if such a high dignitary as Sergius speaks of him in this respectful way."

That very day after mass, Mme. Olga Lochtina brought me, at Bishop Theophanes's apartment a letter from Tsarskoe Selo. It was written by Anna Viroubova, the czarina's most intimate friend, and ran as follows:

With Father Gregory's sanction, Mama will receive you to-morrow at 9 P. M. in my apartment, No. 2 Tzerkovnaia Street. Take the 8:30 train from Petrograd for Tsarskoe Selo.

ANNA.

I saw the empress at the appointed place, and con-

versed with her for fifty minutes, as I related in the first part of this book. The day after this audience Gregory said to me:

"Well, darling, I spoke to the czar about you. I said to him, 'Return Iliodorushka to Tsaritzin!' And he replied: 'How can I do it, Gregory? Did I not twice sign Stolypin's order that Iliodor should be removed from Tsaritzin to Minsk? If I cancel my decision, what will the ministers and the Synod think of me?' And I blurted out: 'Are you the czar? Yes?' 'Yes,' said he. 'Well, be the czar always. How did you sign the reports? From left to right? Yes? Sign now from right to left. Revoke your decision. That is all.' And Papa obeyed me and said: 'I will do as you say, but for the last time. Iliodor must know this, and must not attack my government and my ministers.' "

Such was Gregory's report to me.

That very day I spoke over the telephone with the high-procurator, S. M. Lukyanov.

"Are you soon leaving Petrograd?" asked Lukyanov.

"In two days."

"For Minsk, of course?"

"No, for Saratoff."

"What do you mean? You must go to Minsk."

Instead of replying, I hung up the receiver and went to Saratoff. Gregory came to see me off at the Nicholaïevski terminal.

"The whole thing is arranged," he said. "You will

not be transferred from Tsaritzin. Go home, console your children. Remember Gregory. Do not scold the Government, but do all you can against the Jews and the revolutionists. Rasputin left the carriage; the train pulled out. I felt like bursting into tears of gratitude to Gregory Ephimovitch. In that moment he was like an angel and even more; he seemed to be the right hand of my Saviour.

At Saratoff I received a telegram from Viroubova:

The case is progressing. ANNA.

Twenty days later, as my readers will recall, I received the ukase from the Holy Synod raising the siege of my monastery and permitting me to remain at Tsaritzin. The following resolution of the czar was quoted in the ukase:

I permit the priest Iliodor to return to Tsaritzin on probation for the last time.

NICHOLAS.

Such was the power of Rasputin both in the church and the state. In this instance he proved himself not only the czar, but the patriarch also, and thus, not having been warned by Theophanes, who already knew about the Rasputin "exploits," I accepted favors from this man that were to prove fateful for me and, I think, for the whole of Russia.

In September, 1909, in Tsaritzin, I received a letter from Bishop Hermogenes of Saratoff, asking me to come to him to see my dear friend Gregory Ephim-

ovitch Rasputin. I went there. Rasputin came two days later. I met him near the prelate's house. He was smartly dressed in an expensive fall overcoat and a soft hat. As soon as he entered the house he said:

"What do you think of this, brother? The gendarmes played a trick on me. At Kamishlov, as soon as the train stopped, they woke me up and took me to the office. The officer wanted to see my passport. I showed it to him, and they released me, and everybody around laughed. People thought I was a murderer. All this is Stolypin's doings. He was a friend of mine, but since I crossed his will for your sake, he has been angry with me. Sit down now and write a telegram to the gendarme's officer. Say that I, Gregory Rasputin the New, am sitting now in the apartments of Bishop Hermogenes and that I ask him what right he had to trouble me at Kamishlov."

All this he uttered in great agitation. It was obvious that he, the prophet of the Court, was very much piqued by the gendarmes' presumption. I composed the telegram as he instructed me. Rasputin took it and went himself to send it off.

Before I left Saratoff, Rasputin promised to come to visit me, together with Hermogenes, at some time in the autumn, in November. My imagination was full of the great reception my parishioners and I would arrange for my friend and benefactor. As the month of November approached I began to prepare for my guests. I told the people something

about the saint and how he had been instrumental in returning me from Minsk to Tsaritzin. Everybody became interested in Rasputin's personality.

On November 19, 1909, at noon, Hermogenes came to Tsaritzin, bringing Gregory along with him. They stopped at the house of the merchant's wife, Tarakanova, proceeding thence to the convent church, where services were being performed to celebrate my name-day. Hermogenes ascended the tribune and addressed the people, and Gregory stood among the people, near the women. Never before or afterwards did he seem to me so unpleasant as then. He wore a black, dyed, short sheepskin cloak; the dye had blackened his hands until they were as dirty as a fireman's. There was something cold, gliding, unclean about his glance. Unnaturally stretched out, he stood above the crowd, his dirty hands on the heads of the women in front of him, and with his chin raised so that his beard stood out at right angles to his body, he looked about him with his turbid eyes. When Hermogenes finished his sermon, I, combatting the feeling of utter disgust for the saint, and mentally blaming it all on the devil's wiles, invited Rasputin to the tribune and said to the people:

"Children, here is our benefactor. Thank him."

The people, as one man, bowed to Rasputin, exclaiming, "Save, O Lord! Save, O Lord."

Nevertheless, when upon returning home I asked my lay brother Emilian what impression Rasputin had made, Emilian said:

"Well, the people say bad things. Although they bowed before Brother Gregory in the church, they were saying to one another as they went out, 'What do you think of the master's keeping company with such a scoundrel?' "

The people's opinion of the "saint" stuck in my mind, after that, like an icicle. I remembered how, during my visit in Petrograd, Gregory had invited me to visit the grave of John of Kronstadt, and how, walking along the Lavra Park, he had not let a single woman pass without piercing her with his fixed, persistent glance. When we met a rather good-looking woman, he remarked: "That 's a fine woman; she must be going to see some monk. You know, a monk can't get along without a woman." I kept still, listening to his indecent words. I cared little just then whether or not it behooved God's saint to speak in this fashion. I was too deeply absorbed in reverence for my heaven-sent benefactor. Later I discovered that he had found in Tsaritzin, under my very nose, a virgin field for his "saintly" activities.

Gregory was highly pleased with his reception among my people. Following in his own fashion the sacred precedent established by the holy Efren Siren he had bestowed a kiss upon every female among my votaries. He became so sentimental that once, in my cell, he said to me:

"Well, my friend, write to Papa and Mama that thousands follow me here. Yes, tell them to hurry up and send you a miter."

"I dare not write to czar, especially about a reward for myself."

"You 're a funny fellow; write in my name."

"But the handwriting will be mine. No, I cannot."

"All right, I 'll do it myself." He sat down, and this is what he wrote:

"Dear Papa and Mama: It is tremendous over here; thousands of people are following me. And Iliodor wants a miter."

"Don't write about me! Don't!" I objected.

"Well, well, it 's none of your business," he said, and later mailed the letter.

It was only afterward that I understood why he had mentioned the "thousands." His enemies, headed by Bishop Theophanes, were beginning to wage a campaign against him, and Rasputin was endeavoring to ward off their efforts by pointing out his alleged popularity among the masses. But it was only for my sake that the masses received him. Rasputin realized this, and that was why he added the "miter" to the "thousands" in his letter to the czar and czarina.

The kissing days came to an end. November 27 arrived. A multitude of people assembled at the monastery, and with great acclamation saw us leave for far Siberia, for the village of Poksrovskoye, in the district of Tumen, government of Tobolsk, the birthplace of Gregory Rasputin; for I had agreed to pay a visit with him there. The journey took nine days.

As soon as I was alone with him Rasputin began to tell me the most monstrous, fabulous stories of his life, every one of which I found subsequently to be true and corroborated by facts. Every now and then he interrupted his talk at the sight of women and girls in the railway carriage. He would then begin to stroll to and fro, peeping into their compartments, addressing the good-looking ones and asking them idle questions. Sometimes he would succeed in making an acquaintance, sometimes not. He went skipping along the passageway in his silk shirt, stamping the floor with his boots. I looked at him, wondering, and thought, "It is true you are a friend of mine, but I should like to know more about your being a prophet and saint."

Here is what he told me on our journey.

Up to his thirtieth year he was a habitual drunkard and libertine. Then he began to do penance. One day when his people were making fun of him for his piety he suddenly struck his spade into a heap of grain and went off for a pilgrimage to the holy places. He traveled for a whole year, seeing and hearing; then he returned home. He dug a cave in his stall and prayed to God for two weeks.

Then Saint Simeon of Verchoturje came to him in a dream, and said, "Gregory, go and wander and save people." He went. On the way, in a certain house he saw the wonder-working ikon at the Abalak Virgin, which the monks carried from village to village. Gregory went to sleep in the room where the

ikon was placed for the night. Waking up in the middle of the night, he saw the ikon and shed tears and heard the following words:

"Gregory, I bewail the sins of man. Go, wander, chasten men for their sins, and remove their passions."

Gregory obeyed the Holy Virgin. He visited almost the whole of Russia. He went to every well-known monastery, and became acquainted with priests, monks, nuns, saints, archimandrites, bishops, and finally the imperial family itself. And here let me quote his own words:

"I went to see Father John of Kronstadt. He received me very cordially. He said, 'Wander, wander, Brother. God has endowed you with many gifts; help men; be my right hand, work for the cause which I, the unworthy, am working for.' I called on Barnaby, the saintly old man of the Gethsemane hermitage. I went to him the first time like a genuine peasant, in a cheap greasy coat, in bast-shoes, disheveled, dirty, and he withdrew from me. I went then to a monastery hostelry, to a friend of mine, a rich merchant; I put on his clothes, his fur coat and an expensive hat, took a bath, combed my beard, and returned to Barnaby. As soon as the venerable man noticed me, he beckoned to me, saying, 'Ah, come here, come here, my friend.' Then he blessed and kissed me and took me to his private cell. I said to him, 'Father, I have deceived you.' 'How so?' 'Yesterday I came to you in a peasant's dress, for I actu-

ally am a peasant, but you waved me away. To-day I have come as a merchant, and you have called me in and treated me with respect.' 'Ah, ah,' drawled out the old man, 'you 're a mischief-breeder, Gregory. Don't you know yourself that it would not do to treat all the people equally? There is one way for the rich and another for the poor. The rich are of more use to us.' "

Of course most of what Rasputin told me had to do with visits to the czar's family and how he spent his time with them. I quote here a part of what he said:

"Don't imagine that it is easy to talk to rulers. No, it is hard. The blood clots one's lips; one shrinks from giving them counsel. But they consult me about everything the Duma, the ministers. My enemies do not want me to be with the czar's family, but they cannot get along without me. It may be hard on them to have to listen to a peasant, but listen they do. Once the czar said, 'Be it so,' and I replied, 'No, not so.' His cheeks became flushed, he began to tremble; you see, he did not like the idea of obeying a peasant, but he obeyed just the same. He cannot even breathe without me, and keeps on saying to me: 'Gregory, Gregory, come to see us more frequently; when you are with us we feel joyous, mirthful, at ease. Come, but do not solicit favors for anybody. You know that I love you and am always ready to do anything for you, but at times I find it very difficult to fulfil your wishes when they are contrary to those

of the ministers. You see, they don't love you, especially Stolypin.' When I visited them after the suppression of the revolution, both the czar and the czarina knelt before me and began to kiss my hands and feet. The czarina raised her hands heavenward and said, with eyes full of tears, 'Gregory, even though all the men on earth rise against you, I shall not leave you, and I shall listen to nobody.' And the czar, also raising his hands, exclaimed, 'Gregory, you are Christ!' Their treasury is always open to me. But the czarina is stingy. If I take a thousand rubles, she does not mind. She always gives it without a word; but if I ask her for ten thousand or more, she hesitates, and begins to inquire: 'What do you want the money for? Where is it to go?' However, once I satisfactorily answer her questions, she gives me as much as twenty thousand at a time.

"Once the czar said to me: 'Gregory, I do not like Stolypin. What shall I do?' 'Why, frighten him with your simplicity,' I answered. 'What do you mean?' 'Put on the plainest Russian shirt you have and receive him thus when he comes to you with a very important report,' I said. The czar took my advice. Stolypin, being presented to the czar, remarked, 'Your Majesty, how plainly you are dressed to-day.' And the czar replied as I had told him, 'God Himself abides in simplicity.' Those words made Stolypin bite his tongue.

"You would like to know how I got my last name, 'New'? Once, while I was ascending the palace

staircase, the czar and his family were waiting for me in the dining-room. The czarina held the heir in her lap. Heretofore he had never uttered a word. Hardly had I crossed the threshold when the heir began to clasp his little hands lisping, 'New! new! new!' Those were his first words. The czar therefore issued a decree changing my name from Rasputin to Novy [New].

"I am made welcome in the imperial apartments, and often spend days with the czarina. I have even carried her to and fro like a baby. I visit the children's rooms; I read the evening prayers and sing the national anthem with them. I often play with the children. Once all four girls together clambered up on me, and Alexis sat on my back and I gave them quite a long ride in the nursery. When they got off, the czarevitch said: 'Forgive us, Gregory. We know that you are holy and that we ought not to ride on you, but it was only for fun.'

"When I visit the czar's family I often meet foreign kings. Once Prince Nicholas of Montenegro saw me in a dream when he was ill. He was in great pain, and beheld a Russian peasant, who said to him: 'Get well. You will be able to go out in three days.' And so it happened. He wrote a letter about it to his daughter Militza. Militza sent him my picture. He replied that I was the very peasant he had seen in his dream. While he was ill, at the request of Militza and Anastasia, his other daughter, I had been ardently praying to God for his recovery. When a

court surgeon was performing an operation on Pelagia, my wife, whom the imperial family receive as cordially as they receive me, Militza was present and held her hands.

"The czar and his family love you very much, because in these revolutionary years you have always taken their part and denounced the revolutionists and the Jews. They say, 'Iliodor has acted harshly, but justly, for that is what the times have required. But now he must be quieter; peaceful days have come. Let him refrain from attacking the Government. Tell him not to denounce the ministers and the police.' All the four princesses would like to come to Tsaritzin to visit you. The older ones, Olga and Tatiana, are somewhat shy and say, 'Gregory, we would go there this very moment if we were not afraid that it might cause an uproar and that then nobody would marry us.'

"Do you see this golden cross I am wearing? See, here it says, 'N II.' The czar gave it to me. I expel devils with it. On the way to you at Tsaritzin I expelled a wicked devil from a woman. It was on a river-bank in the government of Kazan. The devil bit me. Just see how black the skin is under the nail. However, I overcame him. He jumped out and escaped under the ice of the river. I wrote a letter about this from Tsaritzin to the czar and his family, telling them not to listen to my enemies and to remember that devils fear me. My enemies think it will be easy to do away with me. The Siberian

priests are furious because I wear this cross; but what do I care? The czar himself gave it to me, and what priest or prelate can remove it?"

Listening to Rasputin's unaffected narration of his extraordinary adventures, I was filled with wonder. Eight days flew by, and we reached Tumen, where we stopped at Dmitri Dmitrievitch's, the trunk-maker's. There Gregory met an old acquaintance, a nun with a sly smile on her pretty face, whom he had met during one of his pilgrimages, and whom he kissed without much ado. Then he disappeared, and it was not till afterward that I found out that he had spent hours with the trunk-maker's daughter, a very good-looking young married woman to whom he was in the habit of bringing money and all kinds of presents on his visits from Petrograd.

Rasputin's family at Poksrovskoye met me very cordially and reverentially, even spreading carpets from the gate to the house. I met Rasputin's father, an old, thick-set, typical Siberian peasant; Rasputin's wife, a good-looking, but sickly, woman, who knew about her husband's adventures, but shielded him out of mercenary considerations; and his daughter Varia, a pleasant nine-year-old girl whose mouth was always open during conversation. The older daughter, Matriona, was then at Petrograd at school. His son Dmitri, a boy of fifteen, was at Saratoff. Rasputin himself had taken him there to study divinity, and had placed him, on Bishop Hermogenes' advice with the steward Votrikov. But the boy, as

I learned later, proved to be very corrupt, did not attend the lessons given him by an instructor of the theological seminary at the rate of twenty-five rubles per month, sang vile songs, and made it necessary for the steward to discharge two servant girls with whom "Mitka" had permitted himself too much freedom. After some months at Saratoff he was taken back to Poksrovskoye to do manual labor.

Rasputin's house was beautiful. He said to me:

"Before this, I owned a little hut, and now just look at this big house. Militzia did all this for me. She gave me twenty-seven hundred rubles."

The rooms were very well appointed, with large, expensive rugs, a multitude of costly ikons on the walls, and all kinds of luxuries, including several imperial portraits with gold crowns. While I, astonished, was examining these things, Rasputin, who was following me, exclaimed:

"These portraits the imperial family themselves ordered for me, and these ikons, Easter eggs, pictures, and lanterns the czarina has given me at various times. This rug is worth six hundred rubles; it was sent to me by Anastasia, wife of the Grand Duke Nicolas Nicolaïevitch, because I sanctioned their marriage. Neither Metropolitan Anthony, or the Holy Synod, or the Patriarch of Constantinople, to whom Nicolas Nicolaïevitch had applied, would permit him to marry her, because it is not lawful for two brothers to marry two sisters. I, however, gave my permission. I reasoned it out in this way: there will be mis-

chief, anyhow; therefore why not bless them? I did so and they sent me this rug."

Presently Rasputin took a key and unlocked a large trunk, from which he took out a packet of letters.

"They are all from the czarina, from the girls, and from the grand duchesses and dukes," he said.

"Brother Gregory, make me a present of a few letters," I begged him.

Rasputin was delighted at my astonishment and said:

"All right, take your choice. Only leave the czarevitch's letter. It 's the only one I have."

I selected a number of letters from the czarina and the princesses. What I did with the original of the czarina's letter the reader will learn later in this book.

The very first evening I spent in Rasputin's home a characteristic incident took place. I noticed two pretty girls running about the rooms. They zealously performed all kinds of housework, sang songs, and in general behaved very decently and quietly. But hear what happened.

As I was going to bed on the sofa in the parlor they brought in mattresses and began to make their beds right near me. I began to protest, but they said:

"Father Gregory told us to sleep here."

"No, no," I exclaimed. "If I 'm in anybody's way, if there is no room for all, I 'll sleep in the bath-

RED SHIRT, PRESENTED BY THE CZARINA TO RASPUTIN, WHO IN TURN GAVE IT TO ILIODOR

Rasputin tore off the collar and gave it to the Czar who was suffering from a sore throat. The Czar wrapped the "Saint's" collar about his neck, slept in it and pronounced his cure a miracle

house. The stove has been made ready there to-day."

At this moment Rasputin's voice came from the adjoining room:

"All right, all right. Leave him alone!"

The girls took their bedclothes and, blushing, left my room. Later I understood that Rasputin had tried to tempt me in order to tie my tongue and prevent me from disclosing his secrets. He used the same method with other friends of his who were familiar with his misdeeds.

Shortly after my arrival, Gregory sent a telegram to the imperial family signing it with both our names. The court replied:

"Sincere thanks. Pleased with your greeting. Anna." I might mention here that when he was absent from Petrograd, Rasputin was in the habit of sending constant messages to the czar and czarina, letters and telegrams, containing condolences, instructions, etc. Congratulating the czar in 1907 upon his name-day, he wrote:

"God will bless the name-day with meekness and with faith. Steadfastness is in heaven, Papa mine!"

Once when Alexandra fell ill, he telegraphed:

"I hope your health will improve. God's blessing is above sickness. Be fearless in everything." [1]

Thus he kept himself constantly in the minds of his protectors. Far or near, his influence over them was ever active.

[1] Lochtina's diaries, in my possession.

One evening Gregory had a little gathering at his house. He invited all the intellectuals of Poksrovskoye: two priests, two women teachers and their sisters, two merchants, and others of the better class. The guests assembled and began to help themselves to refreshments, eating a quantity of jelly patties, candy, and cracked nuts. The conversation was somewhat stiff; especially strange seemed the demeanor of the older priest, Father Ostrouomov. He said little and seemed to be listening for something. Gregory compelled me to say a few words on a religious subject, and I, sitting on a couch in the rear of the parlor, began to deliver a speech on progress and morality. The guests listened attentively, and so did Gregory. Afterwards the girls and Gregory's wife began to sing the Christmas carol I had composed, "Triumph and Rejoice, Good Men, with me." We joined in. Only the priests kept silent. Gregory walked up and down the middle of the room, singing out of tune in an unpleasant, squeaky voice, shaking his beard, knocking on the floor with his feet. He wore a crimson satin shirt and a belt with showy tassels; his cloth trousers lost themselves in long blue silk stockings, and on his feet he had red Turkish slippers. He walked about with his hands in the pockets of his trousers. Looking at him, I could scarcely keep back the evil thoughts that came to me regarding him. "O Lord," I kept thinking, "the saint resembles a he goat. He

walks like a goat and shakes his beard. He looks like one of the lewd devils of the pictures."

The guests left late in the evening. After they had gone, Gregory, pointing to his satin shirt, said:

"This shirt was sewed for me by the Empress. I have more shirts made by her." I asked him to show them to me. Gregory's wife brought them in. I began to examine them. "Well, would you like to have one of them for a souvenir?" asked Gregory, smiling.

"Yes, may I have one or two?"

"Take three. These." He selected for me three shirts, one red, another of white pongee, and the third of expensive white linen, with embroidery along the collar and sleeves. I put them away in my bag. Two of them are still in my possession. The red shirt was without a collar, and I asked Gregory what had become of it. He replied:

"Papa [the czar] had a sore throat and asked my help. I told him to smoke less and to wear the collar of this shirt on his neck and throat at night. He got well, and took it as a miracle."

The last day of my stay with Rasputin came. I announced my desire to call on the older priest, Father Ostrouomov, for a chat. Gregory and his wife tried their best to dissuade me, calling my attention to the fact that the priest did not treat Gregory well and that he slandered him and set afloat all kinds of false tales about him. Nevertheless, I

was determined to go. I was escorted to his house by a fellow-priest, Elias Arapov, a pupil of Gregory. As soon as I came in, Father Peter, immediately after greeting me, asked:

"Why have you come here to Poksrovskoye?"

"To visit a friend."

"Not a friend, but a villain, a libertine."

"What are you talking about, Father?" I must confess that I had gone to him with the intention of contradicting him as much as possible, and thus making him tell the truth about Rasputin.

"Yes, a debauchee. They gave him the name of Novich. Truly he is a *new* debauchee."

"But it was the czar himself who renamed him."

"Well, and what of it? The czarina and he are mystically inclined and fell into his clutches; but he can't fool us."

"Father, if you know anything evil about Brother Gregory, why don't you inform the czar?"

"I know much, but I cannot reach him. People who are higher up than we keep still, and nobody would listen to us. Bishop Theophanes came here, too. What for? To augment the libertine's authority? And now you have come. I can hardly believe that you are a priest. Would a priest come to such a scoundrel? You must be a fugitive from justice."

"Father! And why did you visit Brother Gregory last night?"

"Why? Why? I did not go there to crack nuts, but on the bishop's orders to see what you were doing

there. He used to have all kinds of orgies at his house."

"What kind of orgies?"

"Gregory would assemble a number of girls and would prance about with them and wind up by behaving very indecently. During his pilgrimages he learned all kinds of vileness. And now the silly Petrograd women come to see him; he takes them to the bath-house. There is a woman here, a wafer-baker, who was hardly able to get rid of him. When Gregory was asked about it, he said he knew nothing, and his wife corroborated him. But, it was not his wife who used to drag out by the hair from her house the Petrograd ladies whom she caught with Gregory?"

"And what was his occupation before he became a pilgrim?"

"Before that he was a drunkard and a mischief-breeder. He had no other name but Grishka, the fool."

Father Peter was getting excited, and I was blushing to my very ears.

"Father have you witnessed what you are telling me? Are you sure of it?"

"I know everything; I have seen it all happen. And what I have missed others have seen. The peasants to this day consider him a scoundrel, and the bishop does not even admit him to his presence, no matter how many attempts he has made to be introduced to him. To work himself into the bishop's

good graces, Gregory procured twenty thousand rubles for the erection of a church. And what do you think happened? The peasants would not accept his gift and said: 'We don't want your money. We know how you got it.' He does not care a fig for us priests. Just scrutinize him more closely and you will see what a rascal he is."

I thanked Father Peter, bade him good-by, and left, saying to myself: "Don't worry, Father. I shall be on the lookout. That 's what I came here for."

Gregory met me with great embarrassment.

"Well, he must have told you some fine stories about me?"

"Yes."

"But what? What?" insisted Gregory.

"Well, he said that your wife had fought with ladies on account of you."

Proskovia Theodorovna rushed in from the adjoining room, bawling out:

"He lies, the dirty beast! Nothing of the kind ever took place."

"There 's a mean rascal," added Gregory. "Don't believe him. You know that the popes are malicious and slanderous. Have n't they caused you enough trouble? Don't believe him, or I shall be offended."

I was at a loss and did not know whom to disbelieve, Gregory or Peter. I reflected: "The popes are, as a rule, malicious and slanderous, and

Gregory is my benefactor. Therefore I must listen with caution to what is being said about him. Would a person as base as Father Peter pictured him be tolerated by the imperial family? I shall have to look more closely. If I happen to witness anything with my own eyes, I shall be the first to denounce him publicly as a villain. But even an enemy must be treated with caution when evil is spoken of him. How much more so Gregory, who brought me back to life, who gave Tsaritzin back to me, who filled with joy thousands of people whose only consolation was to hear my services and sermons in the church!" Thus my thoughts wavered back and forth, and I was in two minds during the whole of my visit.

At the end of ten days, on December 15, I started home for Tsaritzin. Gregory and his wife went with me. A snow-storm began. We could not see the horses, we could not even see the driver. I wrapped myself up in my pelisse, and said to myself: "Now I shall think about the saint. The snow-storm hides everything from view, and he won't be able to read my thoughts." On the entire road to Tumen (80 versts) I kept thinking of my friend who sat near me, "What is he, a devil or an angel?"

In Tumen we again stopped at the trunk-maker's, and again Gregory disappeared for the night. He did not go to church, although it was Saturday evening. In general, as I observed, Gregory prayed nowhere, neither at Saratoff nor at Tsaritzin nor at

any monastery where we stopped. He was constantly on the run, running after women and girls and "lecturing" them.

Before our departure the next morning, when the trunk-maker bade us good-by and left the carriage, Gregory remarked:

"Just look at that crank Dmitri Dmitrievitch. He said to me, 'Gregory, take me to the czar; I can give him advice as well as you.' As if every one were gifted by God!" And Gregory smiled in such a way that one could not help seeing how aware he was of his superiority, of his mission, or his being sent by God for the furtherance of great deeds; of his contempt of the poor, red-nosed Dmitri Dmitrievitch, who needed a miserable thousand rubles to enlarge his trunk business, and in order to obtain them was willing to give advice to the imperial family.

On December 20 we arrived at Saratoff. Gregory saw his wife off to Petrograd promising to go there for Epiphany. He was planning to stay with me at Tsaritzin until New Year's. At Saratoff we spent only half a day. Gregory suggested that we should call on the bishop.

"Let 's go to Hermogenes," he said, "and you tell him that I go to the bath-house with women." We went. I told him what Gregory had asked me to, and Hermogenes waved his arms and with evident displeasure remarked: "What for? One should not do such things." It is in place here to declare

CELEBRATION OF ALEXANDER NEVSKY'S NAME-DAY IN THE MAIN SQUARE OF TSARITZIN
Father Iliodor is to be seen in the centre of the group of priests before the door of the Cathedral, addressing the people

that, listening at different times to Rasputin's accounts of his affairs, I did not follow the tactics of Hermogenes. I never openly condemned the "saint," wishing not to embarrass him, but to draw him out completely. And in this I succeeded. Rasputin never spoke to any one about his "saintly" activities as he did to me. Owing to this, I am in a position to relate more about Rasputin than any other of his acquaintances.

On December 23, 1909, Rasputin and I arrived at Tsaritzin. The people accorded us a joyful reception. The next day, during vespers, he came to me for confession. It was a strange confession. With great fear I had prepared for it, considering myself unworthy to receive the confession of a saint. I stood at the altar and spoke not a word. Gregory, too, remained silent, biting the nail of his index-finger and shifting from one foot to another. At length I said: "Well, Brother Gregory, if you have any sins confess them." Gregory held his peace. "Perhaps you act against the teachings of the church?" I added. Gregory frowned, expressing his displeasure, turned his finger round his nose, and said:

"No, no; I don't mean that."

"What, then?"

"Well, my enemies—if they succeed, disturb the czarina, and threaten a scandal—"

"God has exalted you, and your fate is in His hands."

"Well, that is all," said Gregory, and the confession was over. For a long while after that I stood at the altar thinking, "What did he mean by 'disturb the czarina'?" I could not arrive at any solution.

During the holidays we again took to visiting our devotees. Again kissing days came, and some of the kisses caused scandals. There were also scandals of a different nature. For instance, at the house of I. R. Krasnoschokov I introduced Gregory to Nastia the Simpleton, who sat in her rags at the door. Nastia at first shielded herself from Gregory with her hands as from the sun, and cried, "Away! away! I don't want to look at you!" Then she began to spit on him, and finally splashed some tea from a dirty cup into his face. Gregory was exceedingly frightened and tugged me by the sleeve of my cassock, saying: "Brother, let us go. Others may notice it. She 's mad."

Four days after Christmas, Gregory arranged a special festival at the monastery. He had asked me three days in advance to purchase a thousand towels, a thousand handkerchiefs, a great supply of candy, apples, cakes, sugar, small ikons, crosses, and rings. I bought everything. It was announced in church that Brother Gregory was going to distribute souvenirs. About fifteen thousand people assembled. Gregory, before beginning the distribution, delivered a little speech. He said:

"Father Iliodor has planted a vineyard here, and I, as an experienced gardener, have come to trim

and prune it. Here, take these presents; each has a significance. Whatever one gets, such will be his experience in life."

The people greedily seized the cheap presents—greedily, because they all considered Gregory a clairvoyant and desired to have their fortune told by the presents. Whoever received a handkerchief began to cry on the spot. Very few were eager to get sugar, although it stands for sweet life; it was too cheap a present. Marriageable maids almost snatched the rings from Rasputin's hands, and felt grievously disappointed when he gave them ikons, which meant that they would become nuns. After the presents had been distributed, various stories began to circulate through the town of those who, receiving presents portending evil, buried them, and then had a Te Deum offered in order to prevent Rasputin's prophecy from being fulfilled.

On the night of December 30, a crowd of two thousand escorted Gregory to the terminal of the Petrograd railroad. Before leaving the monastery I announced to the crowd that Gregory Ephimovitch intended to build a nunnery at Tsaritzin, where he would be the prior, and that he invited the people to visit him; for he had been so pleased with the distribution of presents that he had promised to intercede with the imperial family for a fifty-thousand-ruble gift for this purpose.

The multitude cried out: "God save him! We 'll come, we 'll come with our father. We 'll come with-

out fail." We left the monastery carrying a Christmas star. At the station we sang hymns and carols. Gregory, from the platform of the carriage, began to deliver a speech about his high position in life; but it was so unintelligible that even I could understand nothing. After him spoke a certain Kositzin. As his speech was hardly superior to that of Gregory, I cut him short. Then Gregory motioned me away in the manner of a general shoving aside a soldier who has said or done something amiss, and addressed Kositzin with an air of courtly etiquette and patronage, saying: "Go on! please do!" Of course I gave in and did not interfere.

The train carried Rasputin away. We returned to the monastery. Near the monastery the star burned away, and the people said, "There goes Gregory's star!" Having taken leave of the people at two o'clock in the morning, I retired to my cell, fell on my knees before the ikon, and began to pray: "Lord, reveal to me whether Rasputin is an angel or a devil! I have noticed many strange things in his behavior; I have heard many evil things about him. Are they untrue? Do not the papers slander me in all ways possible, do they not besmirch me and threaten me, while Thou, O Lord, knowest that I am innocent? Reveal him to me, O Lord!"

And God did reveal him to me.

In January, 1910, when the unmasking of Rasputin began, I took his part. But in March of that year, at the confession of the nun Xenia and the

Tsaritzin shopkeeper, L—— I found out things about Rasputin which put an end to my doubts about him. I understood that he was none other than the devil incarnate.

From that day on my soul broke away from Gregory, and I began to plan for a painless ending of our friendship. I had to meet him, of course, after that time, but the meetings were brought about by extreme necessity and were under no friendly disguise. All I cared for was to collect as much evidence as possible regarding his activities, in order to have sufficient cause to disown him. Rasputin, however, still regarded me as his sincere friend, and sent me letters and telegrams every now and then.

At the end of April, 1910, I went to Petrograd to purchase books for the monasterial library. I stayed at G. P. Sazonov's, once editor or publisher of the paper "Rossia," suspended by the Government for printing Amfiteatrov's feuilleton "Gospoda Obmanovi" ("The Cheats"). I called up Father Benjamin of the theological seminary, and asked him to come to see me and to tell me about Rasputin's escapades. He advised me to apply to Solodovnikov, deacon of the Church of Vladimir, and his sisters. I did so.

"Father Iliodor," exclaimed Solodovnikov, after he had greeted me, "why have you defended that rascal Rasputin?"

"That is why I have come to you now, to collect evidence against him. I defended him; now I shall

unmask him. I am telling you the truth. I did not know him to be, not an angel, but a devil."

"We, too, were deceived at first. And Father Theophanes was led into error and paid the penalty. I am sorry that Lena and my sisters are not here. They would tell you what Gregory did. Lena is in hiding for fear of being killed by Gregory's friends because she told Father Theophanes at confession how Gregory had treated her."

Returning to Sazonov's, I found Rasputin there. He had just come from court. Presently a number of military gentlemen began to arrive, and among them Professor Migulin and several English bankers. All of them, especially Migulin and Sazonov, treated Gregory with servility. Sazonov told me later that they had organized a company for the irrigation of the transcaspian steppes and the foundation of a Russian corn-exchange, and that Gregory Ephimovitch had undertaken to see the affair through at court and mainly to procure the funds required.

While I was till at Sazonov's Rasputin received a letter from Anna Viroubova, the czarina's most intimate friend, requesting us to come at six in the evening to the Marble Palace, to the apartments of her father, Alexander Sergeievitch Taneyev.

We went. On the way Rasputin said:

"Chionia Berlatzkaya, an officer's widow, took offense against me because I said that her father would shovel coals with the devils in hell. She was insulted, and wrote a whole book of nonsense about me and

gave it to the czar. Yesterday he sent for me and said, 'Gregory, shall I read this book or not?' I asked, 'Does it give you pleasure to read in the lives of the saints how slanderers mocked the godly men?' He replied, 'No; it distresses me.' 'Well, do as you please.' Papa took the book, stripped off the covers, tore it in four parts, and threw it into the fireplace. That is how Berlatzkaya's base plot came to nothing. And Theophanes,' he continued, 'had his reward, too. He came to the czarina to slander me, to smirch me. And the czarina said to him, 'Away with you, or I 'll have you degraded!' Yes, now he 'll find no rest in Petrograd, he who used to be the czar's confessor! He 'll rot away like a dog for rebelling in vain."

When we reached the Marble Palace, Rasputin was received by Taneyev, his younger daughter Sana, and her husband, Alexander Erikovich Pistolkors, gentlemen of the bedchamber. Taneyev, a sly little man, led Rasputin aside, spoke to him mysteriously about something, then took his portfolio and departed. Rasputin began to chat with Sana and her husband. During the conversation he kissed her several times, her husband smiling in an innocent, babyish way. Ten minutes later Viroubova entered, and Sana and her husband took their leave.

Rasputin literally danced around Viroubova. With his left hand he stroked his beard and with his right he touched Viroubova's breast, shoulder, and hands. He also kissed her. Viroubova stood

motionless and allowed him to have his way. It seemed as though he hypnotized her.

At least Viroubova said: "Well, they are waiting for me at the palace. I have to go. Good-by, holy Father." And then something unbelievable took place, which I could not have thought possible had I not witnessed it. Viroubova prostrated herself upon the floor, touched with her forehead both of Rasputin's soles, then got up, kissed him thrice on the lips, and kissed his hands several times.

On the way home Gregory said:

"Well, have you seen?"

"I have."

"Well, what do you think of it?"

"What can I think of it? I am stupefied."

"You saw Annushka [Viroubova]. But you should see the imperial family. Oh, if you knew everything! Well, never mind; you will find out some day. And I do it all with my body. My touch conveys a force. Let me just touch you. Well, what do you feel?" He touched my shoulder with his hand and asked,

"Well?"

I felt absolutely nothing, but I mumbled, "Y-y-yes."

From Petrograd, at the beginning of May, I went to Saratoff to see Bishop Hermogenes on business. I found that Gregory had just arrived there from Kazan. Passing from Hermogenes' study into my

own room, I beheld a strange sight; in a far corner of the room stood Rasputin, clad in my cassock and wearing my gold pectoral cross.

Seeing me, he began to smile in a repulsive, servile manner, as though he had just got through doing something offensive, and said:

"Well, well, my friend, how does the cassock become me? Tell me, will you?"

"It is all right," I replied slowly, though I could hardly keep from blurting out my disgust.

"And would it not be nicer like this?"

With these words Gregory took my cowl off the table and put it on.

"No, that does not become you," I said, thinking to myself. "Just let him into a convent, and he 'll carry on there like a fox among geese." At the same time I was wondering: "What makes him try on the cassock and the cross? Does he intend to become a priest? The vile creature! And he may become one, too. Did he not say to me once, 'They 'll make me a priest, and I 'll become the czar's confessor; then I 'll always stay at court.' "

I was right in my surmise. In an hour or so I was enlightened on the subject. I was beginning to get ready to leave for Tsaritzin when Hermogenes said to me:

"Wait; do not go. There is something to be done here."

"Your Reverence, everything is at a standstill there

in my absence, and the construction of the monastery has come to a halt. As it is, I have been idle for more than a week. Let me go."

"You are always in a hurry," said Hermogenes, a little irritably. "I have something important for you to do. The people in Tsaritzin will have to wait."

"Very well, your Reverence; I 'll stay. Do not be offended. What is it that you have for me?"

"You must prepare Gregory Ephimovitch for the priesthood."

"Your Reverence, he is illiterate; he cannot read or write. And then his life—"

"Never mind; he will repent. All you have to teach him is the liturgical prayers and exclamations."

"Very well. To obey you I will begin at once."

Gregory and I sat down in the parlor at the round table, on a soft divan. Hermogenes brought his large-type mass-book, and I began to instruct Rasputin:

"Well, Brother Gregory, just say this, 'Let us pray to God all together.' Gregory did not follow the book. He held his finger approximately on the spot where the prayer was printed, tilted his head backward, drawled out in a monotonous, snuffling voice, "Let us pray God all together." It was as if he were picturing himself in advance in the rôle of a priest, falling in love with himself and dreaming how his cassock would completely and firmly establish

him at the court and make him the imperial confessor.

It took him the whole of the first day to learn the first prayer. "There won't be much progress with a pupil like this," I said to myself. And there was not. The whole of the second day I spent trying to teach Gregory the second prayer, "Let us pray to God for peace above and the salvation of our souls." It would not get into his head. Now he would begin to read it from the end, now from the beginning, and then he would wander back to the first prayer.

Finally I could stand it no longer. I went to Hermogenes and said:

"Your Reverence, please let me go to Tsaritzin."

"How about Brother Gregory?"

"Will you believe it? We have spent the whole day on the second prayer without any results. He cannot master it, and keeps running to the steward's. Let me go, your Reverence. He is a block-head; he cannot learn anything."

Hermogenes bent his head low and kept still for a long while; then he said:

"Yes, I see myself that Gregory is dull. Well, God be with you! Return home." I made a low bow and went to my room.

Later, whenever he was asked by newspaper men or other people whether he had ever intended to become a priest, Gregory would invariably give the same answer:

"Nonsense! How could I enter the priesthood—I, an illiterate peasant?"

"But people say that you tried to."

"They lie; what can you do with liars?"

In February, 1911, Rasputin went on his famous pilgrimage to Mount Athos and Jerusalem, doing penance for some great sins that he never confessed to anybody. Four months later, on June 17, his secretary, Akilina Laptinskaya, and Mme. Lochtina came to me at Tsaritzin, saying:

"Prepare to receive the great guest."

"Whom?"

"Father Gregory is returning from Jerusalem through Petrograd."

"And when is he coming to Tsaritzin?"

"He wrote he would come after the twentieth of the month."

"I shall have to be in the diocese of Rostov then. I am going to inspect the land given to the monastery."

"So you are not going to meet Father Gregory? Who, then, will meet him? Is it right to dispose of an important affair in this way? You must assemble a great number of people and march to the railroad station or to the pier, whether he comes by rail or the Volga. Forget about your land. He who is coming is greater than anything that concerns you here."

"No, I cannot. All my time is taken up."

ILIODOR DURING A VISIT TO HIS FATHER'S PEOPLE
Drying a net in company with four of his brothers

Lochtina and Laptinskaya were very much offended, but I went on my errand.

When I came back in three days Gregory was already at Tsaritzin. He had already made the acquaintance of a young and pretty teacher who had come from Ural to see my monastery and was staying at the monastery hotel. According to Lay Sister Eugenia Ponomareva, the saint had at once got on friendly terms with her, and had, it appears, insisted upon "curing" her. She had, however, stubbornly insisted that she was not ill and refused to undergo the treatment. This irritated Rasputin considerably; he was morose and kept repeating:

"You don't understand. The well is deep, but your ropes are too short."

Rasputin greeted me coldly and looked at me askance.

"I am always busy," I began. "I have just come, and now I must go away again."

"Where?" asked Gregory.

"To the Dubyovsk nunnery for holiday services. The mother superior has begged me to come, and I have to respect her wishes. They expect a large crowd, and they have only one old, sickly priest there."

"Oh, don't go. I want you to do something with me here. You can go after I leave."

"No; impossible. Although I have a cold, I must go. I gave my word." I went. Gregory, Loch-

tina, Laptinskaya, and about fifty girls of the church choir went with me.

Neither on the way nor at the nunnery did any one of my devotees pay the slightest attention to Gregory. They did not consult him, kiss his hands, or run after him, as they had during his first and second visits to Tsaritzin. This became specially noticeable, inasmuch as Lochtina and Laptinskaya constantly trod on Gregory's heels, like two walking mummies.

The people of Tsaritzin, had, in fact, seen through Rasputin long before, but had feared to speak about it openly, thinking that I still loved him.

They showed how they distrusted him in several striking ways after our return from the Dubyovsk nunnery. During my absence photographs had been received, exhibiting me in the attitudes I had taken while visiting my parents in the Don district at the beginning of June. I was photographed angling, drinking tea at the barn, and among my relatives. The people showed great interest in my doings at my birthplace, and with great curiosity examined the photographs, which somebody had nailed to the inside wall of the monastery. When we entered the cell, Gregory remarked impertinently:

"You keep on glorifying yourself, don't you?"

"What do you mean?"

"Why, have n't you exhibited your pictures?"

"It was not I. I do not know who did it."

"Well, be that as it may, it is for your own people.

Just see how they flock there. And why did you cut off my picture?"

The photograph of Gregory referred to was one that had been taken of himself, Bishop Hermogenes, and me in a group. The people had insisted that the figure of Rasputin should be cut off, warning the photographer that otherwise they would not buy it.

"The people cut it off. I did not even know about it."

"It 's a lie. You cut it off."

"Go and find out."

He ran down to the chandler who was selling the photographs, and inquired. When he came back he said:

"It is true. The people did it. Don't they love me? You did not tell them anything about me, did you?"

"No, since my defending you I have never spoken about you again."

"Look! look! The people are crowding into the church," he then exclaimed, changing the subject.

Indeed, the singers of the monastery choir were coming to the rehearsal; they numbered a thousand.

"When the rehearsal is over," he continued, "call the people to the porch and tell them that whoever wishes to receive my advice and blessing shall at once go into the church. I will meet them there."

"All right. I shall do as you ask me, but I do not vouch for the results."

After the rehearsal the people crowded together

in the porch. Rasputin stood near me. I delivered Rasputin's request to the people. Without replying, they continued looking at me, for they had not seen me the whole week.

"Well, do you hear me?"

"We do."

"Well, those who desire go back into the church."

From the enormous crowd three shriveled old women stumbled up the steps and went in.

Rasputin saw this. His face was sad and morose. Hurriedly he went down-stairs. I supposed he was going into the church; but instead he turned to the gate, and betook himself to the pretty teacher from Ural.

The next day Gregory entered my cell and began to babble monstrous things. He said:

"You 'd better listen to me, my friend. It was I who got you returned to Tsaritzin again. I kept on annoying the royal family with telegrams from Jerusalem. They were stubborn at first, but gave in in the end and returned you. I told them to send away Procurator Lukjanov. They did. I will soon have Stolypin chased away. The royal family are angry with you for your escape from Novosil. They were about to send you money for the erection of a new church there, and suddenly you ran away. Well, it 's all right. They love you in spite of it, they do. When you were presented, the czar liked you very much, and as for your sermons, he 'd go on listening to them forever. And Mama is preparing

for you an expensive diamond panagia; it will cost a hundred and fifty thousand rubles. They want to make you a bishop, so much was the czar pleased with your service in the chapel at Tsarskoe Selo, with your sermon and everything. And they like you because you are with me and defend them strongly. Don't worry. I am telling you the truth." Gregory paused; wrinkles appeared on his forehead. He bit his nail, and it was evident that something great was going on in his soul. Then he suddenly gave a start and turned his head to me. His cheeks flushed, a strange, feverish fire lit up his eyes, and he said precipitately,

"And do you know, do you know, it was I—I who gave them an heir."

"How so?" I asked.

He explained himself clearly, and suddenly ran out of the cell, and in great agitation paced to and fro on the balcony for a long while.

He told me this at the end of June, 1911; on the 28th, if I remember aright.

That very day I placed Rasputin before an ikon and spoke to him thus:

"Gregory, make a clean breast of the accusations against you. Is what they write about you true?"

He shook his finger threateningly and said:

"What is the matter with you, you funny fellow? You believe all kinds of nonsense. Look out!"

I was frightened, and ceased speaking, sincerely surprised at my own audacity.

Meanwhile I was arranging for a great popular pilgrimage to the Sarov hermitage. Every evening a number of people gathered at the monastery to register and to obtain tickets. There were many poor people among them who did not have the fare. Gregory availed himself of the opportunity to attempt for the last time to raise his popularity and importance among my devotees. He offered the people three thousand rubles for the poor, promising to procure the money. Then he went to his cell and wrote a telegram to the czarina, asking her to give the three thousand rubles for the Sarov pilgrimage.

This interested me vitally. I wanted to ascertain once more whether Gregory was still influential at the court or whether he was telling me lies. The next day the money did not come, and every one went about asking, "Will the czarina send the money, or will she not?" Of course Gregory was more agitated than anybody else. Laptinskaya and Lochtina came to me and said: "This is serious. Father Gregory has a hemorrhage in the throat. He is very excited because the czarina has not sent the money yet." On the fourth day the money came. Pistolkors wrote:

Annushka has handed me 3000 rubles from Mama for the Sarov pilgrimage. The delay has occurred because Mama did not make out at first the place of the pilgrimage. She thought it was to Saratoff, to Hermogenes. Later she saw her mistake, and immediately gave the money to be sent to its destination. With love,

A. Pistolkors.

Having received the money, Gregory declared he was going to leave for Poksrovskoye the next day. Lochtina and Laptinskaya came to me, urging me that it was necessary to see Gregory off with as much solemnity as possible and to present him with a handsome ikon, flowers, and some valuable gift. I obeyed. On Sunday I ordered a collection in church for this purpose. The church was crowded, but only twenty-nine rubles were collected. I sent this money out for a cheap ikon and a tea-set.

Laptinskaya and Lochtina, who were watching the preparations with a vigilant eye, hurried over to me and exclaimed:

"Have you gone mad? To present such a great man with such trash! What will the people say?"

"The people have had their say already. They put only tweny-nine rubles in the plate, and I have no money for presents."

"Oh, so it is only a question of money. Why did you not tell Father Gregory? We will bring the money at once." In five minutes they returned with three hundred rubles. "Here is the money," they said.

"Well, go yourselves and buy whatever you please," I told them.

They bought an expensive ikon and an expensive tea-set.

Rasputin also had kept an eye on the whole affair. In the evening, when the presents were brought, at

Ribakov's house he said to the teacher, Tonia Ribakova, word for word, as follows:

"Iliodor does not show enough respect for my rank. He has been spoiled. Does he not know that it is only due to me that he is still at Tsaritzin? He will fare badly."

The day of departure came. The people gathered. A bouquet of flowers was presented to Rasputin by the little girl named Pluchina, who said, "Your soul is as beautiful as these flowers." Somebody presented the tea-set; then I, making a supreme effort, presented the ikon and made a speech. Every word I uttered stung my throat like a needle.

Gregory was moved by all this and began to speak to the people. For the first time since our acquaintance he seemed personally attractive to me. His tall, slim figure, covered with a costly, sleeveless Russian overcoat, was stretched forward, and he seemed to be an aërial being, ready to take wing from the high platform on which he stood. He spoke abruptly, firmly, and sonorously. These are the words that remain in my memory:

"Yes, my foes have arisen against me. They think they will make an end of me. But what are they? Worms crawling on the inside of the cover of a barrel filled with sauer-kraut. That is what they are. They want to throw me down. Let them wait a little!"

The word "wait" Gregory pronounced with such inner force that it became clear to me that every-

PILGRIMAGE OF FATHER ILIODOR AND HIS FOLLOWERS ON THE VOLGA, JULY, 1911
Madame Lochtina may be seen in the middle of the upper deck, directly under the funnel

thing he had told me at different times about his "activities" at the imperial palace was nothing but the naked truth from beginning to end. However, much as I liked Gregory's appearance at that moment, I felt not a trace of remorse in my soul. I thought, "The devil himself—that is exactly what you are."

The monastery-dwellers escorted Gregory to the steamboat-pier. From the upper deck of the steamer he delivered another speech, again about his enemies. Then the steamer put off, the people began to disperse, and I, just as after the first departure of Gregory from Tsaritzin, went to my cell, fell on my knees before the ikon and began to cry and call to God: "Lord, rid me of this devil! When I did not know him, I defended him. Now that I do know him, I have not the courage to smite his eyes. I am afraid lest they drive me out of Tsaritzin, injure the people, and ruin my sacred cause. Lord, appoint the time for me to get rid of Gregory! Appoint it, and save me, and let me remain at Tsaritzin!"

And God appointed the sixteenth of December, 1911. That day I got rid of Rasputin.

CHAPTER II

RASPUTIN'S OWN STORY

LET us be just even to the devil. I wish to present here Rasputin's own story of his life, from which it will be clearly seen how highly he regarded himself, considering himself the most righteous among the blessed.

The following pages, entitled "The Life of an Experienced Pilgrim," were written from his dictation in the village of Poksrovskoye, in the spring of 1907, by Chionia Berlatzkaya. At one time Rasputin brought pressure upon the Holy Synod to have them publish the life and recommend it to the attention of the faithful. This the Holy Synod refused to do. Afterward it came into the possession of Lochtina, from whom I received it. The manuscript is now in my hands. In quoting from this manuscript I have from necessity made certain emendations.

Up to the age of twenty-eight I led what people call a worldly life. I loved the world and everything in it, and I sought consolation from a worldly point of view. I drove, I fished, I plowed, and my life was fairly easy for a peasant, though many sorrows fell to my lot. I had to suffer all kinds of ridicule among the laborers. In my heart I always cherished

a hope of finding the road to salvation. I became a pilgrim, and in my pilgrimages I often had to bear all kinds of calamities and misfortunes. There were attempts to kill me, but the Lord watched over me. More than once I was attacked by wolves, but they did not harm me. Many a time highwaymen came to rob me. I would say to them:

"What you wish to take is not mine, but God's. I will gladly give you all I have."

Then something would speak in their hearts; they would think for a moment and say:

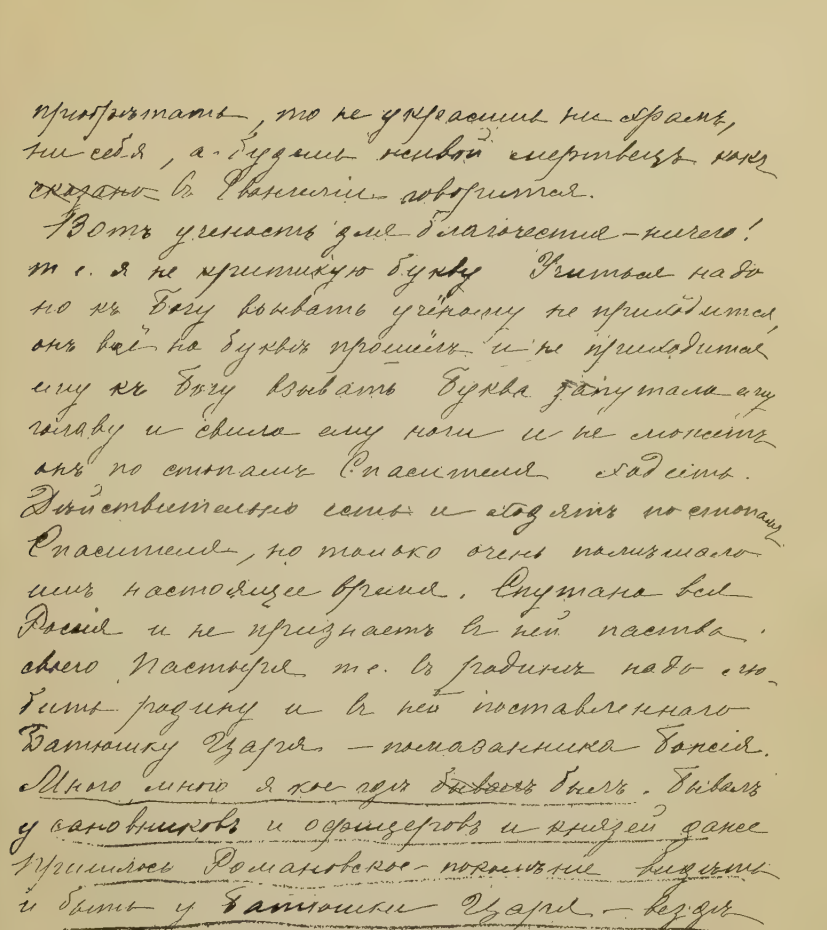
"Where did you come from, and what is the matter with you?"

"I am a man, a brother sent to you, and devoted to God," I would answer.

It is sweet to write about this now, but I had to live through it all. I used to walk forty and fifty versts, heeding neither storm, wind, nor rain. Often I had to go hungry. More than once I wandered from Tobolsk without changing my underclothing for half a year and without touching my flesh with my hands. This I did for the sake of experience and trial. Often I walked for three days at a stretch, eating very little. On hot days I imposed a fast on myself, drank no kvass, and worked with the laborers, at intervals running into the bushes to pray. I liked to walk along the river-banks, finding consolation in nature and thinking of the Saviour who also liked to walk near streams. Nature is a teacher of wisdom, just as every tree teaches of spring.

I found another comfort greater than all other comforts in daily readings from the Gospel, though I did more thinking than reading. Then for three years I wore shackles, but the evil one disturbed me, saying, "You are exalted; you have no peers." The shackles did me no good, but when I discovered the chains of love, I loved everybody. One time, when I was meditating about many things, it suddenly dawned upon me that the Lord Himself had not chosen a palace, but a poor manger, to be born in; and I, the unworthy, got the idea of imitating Him. I dug a cave in the stable and went to pray there between mass and matins. Whenever I was free during the day I would retire there, and I found that my thoughts did not scatter in the narrow place. Often I spent my nights there, too, though the arch enemy tried to drive me out by means of noise and even blows. So it went on for eight years, and finally the arch enemy sent his men under some pretext, and I had to move to another place.

It is good to wander, but not for many years. I visited many a pilgrims' hostelry, and I met pilgrims who had wandered not only for years, but all their life long, and the end was that the enemy had sown his heresies among them, poor souls, chief among these being philosophizing. They had become so lazy and negligent that I found only one in a hundred following in the footsteps of Christ Himself. We wanderers fall an easy prey to the enemy. Lassitude breeds evil. That is why one should not wander too



PAGE OF THE MANUSCRIPT OF "THE LIFE OF AN EXPERIENCED PILGRIM," TAKEN DOWN AT RASPUTIN'S DICTATION BY CHIONIA BERLATZKAYA

Original in Father Iliodor's possession. Translation of underlined passage:—"I have been in many, many places. I have been among courtiers, officials, and Grand Dukes, and even in the household of the Romanoffs, with the Little Father, the Czar—everywhere"

long at a stretch, unless one has fortitude and power of will and is deaf and even somewhat dumb. I visited many monasteries in God's name, but of this sort of spiritual life—that is, leaving one's wife and becoming a monk—I do not approve. Many people I saw there, but they did not lead the lives of monks. They lived as they pleased, and their wives did not keep the vows they had given their husbands. That is how they earn eternal damnation. One must subject oneself to severe trials in one's own village for years, must be tried and experienced, before one can live this life properly. But it is hard to find salvation among laymen, especially nowadays, when everybody watches those who are seeking salvation as if they were murderers, and ridicules them. More than once I have seen people exiled who in their gatherings spoke of God and lived fraternally in godly love, in accord with the words of the Saviour, and found no fault save in themselves, sang psalms, and read them the Gospel.

But, oh, how crafty the enemy is, how shyly he hunts those who are seeking salvation! Once while on a ride in winter-time, when it was very cold, the enemy whispered to me, "Take off your hat and pray, for those who do shall succeed in what they attempt." I took off my hat and began to pray until it seemed to me that I beheld God very near me. And what was the outcome? I caught a cold in my head, and then I was taken seriously ill and had a high fever. I went through an ordeal, and when I

got over it I fasted and prayed to atone for my transgression. One may pray in the open, but not remove one's hat when the air is freezing. Those who seek salvation and God disinterestedly will fall a prey to no temptation whatsoever, but will gain experience instead. Only after such temptation one must add more strength and act with reason, not forgetting oneself and soaring too high, but advancing little by little, as becomes a true zealot.

One must be careful to remember God while at work, and especially while fishing. One may think of the Saviour's apostle who also used to spread nets. When tilling the soil, one must remember that work leads to salvation, that it honors the flesh and saves the soul. It is necessary to say our Lady's Prayer every now and then, and if one happens to be in a thick forest, to think of the deserts where our former fathers of the church used to save themselves. The enemy grudges those who seek the Lord and whom he cannot tempt in anything, and he sends illnesses to overtake them. Those who pray with genuflections get pains in the back, and those who wander, in their legs. All this happens at the enemy's instigation. Those who fast, feel an inexpressible thirst. Those who cross themselves sometimes find their hands paralyzed. Some the enemy frightens at night with all kinds of noises and terrors and other horrid things.

My early life was a long succession of sicknesses; every spring I used to spend forty sleepless nights.

Thus I lived from fifteen to thirty-eight years of age. And the poor state of my health accelerated my determination to make a new start in life. Medical science did not help me. The Kieff saints cured me, and Simeon the Righteous of Verchoturje gave me strength to learn the way of truth and healed my insomnia. It was very hard to bear all this, and there was work to be done, but the Lord used to assist me in my labors, and I myself worked without hiring anybody. When I began to travel through holy places I found enjoyment in the other world. I visited many a prelate, and we had discussions, and they scrutinized me closely. I came to them with subdued and humble heart, and they listened to my simple words; for I came to them not only with a simple spirit, but by God's grace.

Let me relate one more of the experiences and trials of my life. Once, in Peter's Lent, I went to the island to gather some bast and dragged it more than half a verst to the lake to soak. I ate a little bread, but could not drive away the gnats and gadflies. At five o'clock in the evening I took off my shirt and prayed to Jesus with a hundred genuflections. The detestable enemy made me feel morose, but the stings of the gnats and gadflies did me good and taught me endurance and patience. That is why I do not advise people to ask for miracles or to undertake great exploits, but rather to undertake deeds commensurate with their strength. I learned to suffer blows and bodily tortures. To sleep in a soft bed is good for

refined people, but it is sweeter to sleep in the field on a hillock, with the birches near by, where one does not miss the dawn. I used to plow during summer nights, and I did not drive away the gadflies. I let them bite my flesh and suck the bad blood, saying to myself: "They, too, are God's creatures, just as I am. Had not God created the summer there would have been no gnats." What a golden life the peasant has, feeding even the gnats for God's sake! The peasant is ingenious and experienced. His soul is alive, and he goes through many experiences; only his intellect is dormant, because he does not go to school. One thing is sure: knowledge is with God and in God; it consists of communing with the Lord in His temple, and of receiving the sacrament three times a year. If you preserve all that is in you, you will meet with misfortunes and persecutions, and priests will question you; but God gives you a strength which makes their dogmas look very insignificant.

I wish to speak briefly about my benefactors. It is not in vain that the Holy Scriptures say that good service brings reward. God's joy has dwelt in my sinful being. I, a common peasant in quest of donors, traveled from the government of Tobolsk with one ruble in my pocket, and saw gentlemen throwing cake into the Kama River while I was half dead with hunger. "The dogs eat sugar," I said, "and I have not even a pinch of tea." Imagine how

I felt! I went to Petrograd, where I felt like a blind man on the road. First of all I visited the Alexandro-Nevsky Monastery to do homage to the relic of the saints. With me I had a bag of dirty underwear. I had an orphan's Te Deum sung for three copecks, and paid two copecks for a candle. Leaving the monastery, I betook myself to Sergius, bishop of the theological seminary. The police said to me, "What do you want of the bishop, you friend of the ragamuffins?" With God's help I entered through the back door and found the doorkeeper with the aid of the porters. The doorkeeper showed his kindness by trying to throw me out. I knelt before him. He divined something extraordinary in me and announced me to the bishop, who called me in, scrutinized me, and engaged me in conversation. He told me about Petrograd, acquainting me with its streets, and afterward introduced me to personages of high rank. Thus finally I reached our father the czar, who favored me, understood me, and gave me money for a church. Overjoyed, I went home and applied to the priests for the erection of a new temple. But the enemy hates good deeds, and before I had reached home he already tempted everybody. I did them a favor in seeking to build the church, and they sought to accuse me of such pernicious heresy and talked such nonsense that it is impossible for me to express it or even to think of it. So strong is the enemy in harming a man, so little does he appreciate good acts.

They accused me of being an upholder of the lowest, vilest sects, and the archbishop did all in his power to oppose me.

It is difficult to analyze love for one who has not experienced it. Love is such a golden treasure that nobody knows its price. Love is the greatest of all God's creations. Whoever understands this golden treasury of love is wiser than Solomon. There are two kinds of priests, those hired by their parishioners and those whom life itself has prompted to become shepherds and who endeavor to serve God. And the hireling always criticizes and informs against the true servant of God.

God's chosen relish perfect love, and it is good to go and listen to them. They speak not from books, but from experience, for they pay the price of love. The enemy interferes and tries with all his might to prevent man from grasping love, for it brings trouble and calamity to the enemy himself. Therefore, brethren, beware of the enemy; and sisters, think of love, the golden treasury of purity. Keep on singing psalms and spiritual songs. The miscreant enemy looks for opportunities and incites the priests, "It is not a brotherhood they have; they are upholders of sects." But we shall not fear evil rumors. We shall continue to serve God. We shall sing to Him and glorify Christ, and above all we shall love the church and receive the sacrament as often as possible.

Thus you see that Rasputin considered himself a

great ascetic, excelling every one in the knowledge of holy things. Let me now briefly mention certain very well-known personages who have recorded their complete faith in the "saint's" opinion of himself.

Madame Lochtina, in the voluminous diaries which she kept and which are now in my possession, eulogizes the great Father Gregory, whom she finally calls nothing less than "the law incarnate." Alexander Ericovich Pistolkors, gentleman of the bedchamber, whenever I met him invariably spoke of Gregory as "our great clairvoyant, prophet, and ascetic." Varnava, Bishop of Tobolsk, on the day when the assassination of Rasputin was attempted, announced before everybody, "Let us pray for the welfare of God's devoted servant." Alexis, the Exarch of Georgia, when requested by certain priests to curb Gregory's "saintly activities," said: "We should not lay our hands on God's great servant. Every one who rises against him will call forth God's punishment." Count Witte attested before everybody that Gregory was "a man with an unusually lofty soul." Bontsh-Bruyevich, the well-known writer, prophesied that Gregory was "the dawn of a new religious revival of the Russian people."

Need I say that Czar Nicholas and Czarina Alexandra, in their appreciation of the newly risen "saint," sometimes excelled all his other admirers?

I personally heard the czar's opinion of Rasputin when I was presented to him at the palace in Tsarskoe Selo on May 21, 1911, and I heard Czarina Alexan-

dra's opinion when I was presented to her on April 3, 1909, in the apartments of Anna Viroubova. Nicholas, with unstrung nerves, blinking his lifeless, tired eyes, said to me, word for word, as follows:

"Thou—you—thou—don't—touch my ministers. Did n't Gregory tell you—tell you? Yes. He—must be obeyed. He is our—father and savior. We must adhere to him—yes. God has sent him—he told thee—you—that—you must work mostly against Jews, Jews and revolutionists; but leave my ministers alone. Their enemies attack them as it is. We obey Father Gregory, and what do you mean—"

And here is what the czarina said about him:

"Take care to abide by Father Gregory, our common father, savior, instructor, and greatest contemporary saint."

CHAPTER III

RASPUTIN AND THE CZAR'S COURT

THE reader has now heard of my early acquaintance with Rasputin and of the steps by which I was led to break with him. He has also heard Rasputin's own story, his own self-justification, and has seen how the most exalted personages of Russia accepted at its full value the saint's high opinion of himself. What, in reality, then, was this man? In this chapter I purpose to remove all doubts. When I have shown the true nature of his activities at the court of the czar and the czarina, I believe the reader will understand that he was not only, as the word "Rasputin" denotes, dissolute, but was indeed the devil himself.

It may seem strange that an uncouth peasant, an illiterate imposter, could have gained an entrance into the czar's household at all; but the fact is that Nicholas it quite as superstitious as the most ignorant muzhik in Russia. In order to understand this, my readers must form some idea of the peculiar character of Slavic mysticism.

This mysticism is inspired in Russia by three elements, the climate, the geographical situation of the country, and the Russian religion. The Russian Church prescribes a season of Lent which stretches

over six months and covers the greater part of the winter season. During these long winter months, when the climate is most rigorous, a large part of the Russian population is under-nourished. In the autumn it rains for weeks in succession. The steppes are gray and monotonous. Dismal forests stretch over hundreds of miles. All these conditions communicate themselves to the underfed brain, which imperceptibly passes over into a brooding melancholy that crushes the individual like a nightmare, filling him with dead inertia and hopeless resignation.

The peasants, when stricken by this melancholy, which often goes over into sickness, will walk miles and miles to consult a sorcerer or a wonder-worker, to obtain a charm, an herb, or a prayer. From this tendency the czars themselves have never been exempt. Though lords of vast domains and masters over millions of people, they have notoriously failed to rise above their melancholy and master their own moods. Like the peasants, they have always turned for relief to seers and mystics, and although they have been autocrats of the purest water, they have never ceased to believe in the divine democracy that is implicit in the Orthodox Church. All religious Russians, in short, believe that the prophetic spirit of today comes oftenest to the peasant at the plow, to the mendicant, the pilgrim who wanders over the steppes, the immense grey Russian plains, driven on by a vague longing, in search of holy men and sacred places.

When such a peasant mystic became widely known, he generally found his way to the Russian court. If he was simple and honest, the wizard would give the czar his blessing and depart; but if he was crafty and cunning, he often became the tool of one or another of the cliques about the palace, and for a time at least exerted influence over the affairs of the state. The stories of all the Romanoffs are bound up with occultists and soothsayers, which partly explains their terrible history. And Nicholas was one of the weakest of the Romanoffs. Rasputin, therefore, was not an isolated figure; he was simply the most eminent and powerful of a large group.

From the year 1900 the politics of the Russian court was conducted not by ministers, but by various cripples, lunatics and saints brought in by courtiers who sought through their medium to gain influence with Nicholas and Alexandra.

On the days when Nicholas received his ministers and listened to their reports, scenes like this would take place in the imperial palace. Through the main entrance the high officials, with portfolios in their hands, would hurry to the czar's study, while at the same time through the back entrance various saintly idiots of both sexes would crowd into the imperial apartments. They were filthy, ragged, barefooted cripples, clad in quaint attire. The soldiers on guard did not recognize them, and they were not officially admitted. It was by climbing over the fence and

through iron bars that they found their way into the court.

While the czar was receiving his ministers, this dirty band crowded into his apartments. They entered the bedrooms and played with the czar's children. They pried into every corner and filled the kitchens. As soon as they found out that the ministers had left, one by one they filed into the study, where Nicholas consulted them. Not infrequently it happened that their mere word destroyed all the reports and schemes of the ministers.

Rarely did all these "prophets" live at peace among themselves. They were constantly engaged in intrigues, trying to entrap one another in every possible way. Each one had his devotees and protectors among the courtiers and other eminent personages, and a bitter struggle went on among them. Whenever one of them fell into disfavor and was removed from the Court, he was consumed with the wild anger and burning desire for vengeance that are not usually associated with holy men and women.

I have known personally several of the czar's prophets and saints. I shall enumerate them here in chronological order as they made their débuts at the imperial court.

Matronushka the Barefooted heads the list. She was a peasant of the government of Petrograd, and from her earliest years had played the part of half idiot and half saint. She used to go barefooted both in summer and winter, telling fortunes for servant

girls. She was nearly eighty when, to the disgust of the court officials, she was installed in the czar's household. Some one had told Nicholas that she foretold future events with great accuracy. He immediately despatched couriers through the underworld of Petrograd, who found her in a dirty basement, in the poorest quarter of the city, cooking fish stew for supper. From that day on she had free access to the palace, and was treated with the respect of a member of the imperial household. The czar and czarina would spend hours listening to her insane gibberish, in which she predicted a future male heir to the throne. She died, if I am not mistaken, in 1908, and was buried in the Church of the Holy Virgin.

Most of Nicholas' saint-idiots were only too wise, at least in their own affairs, and played the part of fools only in the presence of others; but I believe that Matronushka was a genuine idiot.

Another genuine idiot was the prophetess Pasha Sarovskaya. She was said to be 110 years old, and lived at the Diveev Monastery in the forests of Tambov. When the czar and the czarina heard about her they applied all the means at their command to bring her to Petrograd and make her their court saint. And Pasha would not hear of it, and Nicholas and Alexandra finally went to her for a visit. Knowing her reputation for saintliness, they wanted to pray to her for a son and heir to the throne.

This occurred during the celebration of the uncovering of the remains of Saint Seraphim in 1901, in

which two hundred and fifty thousand pilgrims from all parts of Russia took part. Seven years later the mother superior of the monastery told me about the imperial couple's visit to Pasha. I shall tell the story as nearly as I can remember in her own words:

"As soon as I was informed that the czar and the czarina were coming to see Pasha, I brought her the news. When she heard it she began to curse the czar and the czarina, calling them names and sending them to the devil. A deathly terror came over me.

" 'Pasha,' I began to implore her, 'Pashenka, what is the matter with you? The Little Father and the Little Mother are coming to see you. Won't you at least have pity on my gray head?' And Pasha began to shout:

" 'I am going to beat them. I shall beat them with this stick.'

"I fell at her feet.

" 'Pashenka, pity me!' I begged. 'Receive the czar decently.' At last I succeeded in calming her and began to feel more at ease.

"Finally the day of the czar's visit came. Three hours before the czar and czarina arrived, I went to Pasha, and with great difficulty persuaded her to put on a nun's dress. I virtually had to force her to do it. The czar and czarina arrived. They asked me to take them to see Pasha. I ran ahead in order to receive them together with Pasha at the door of her cell. And what did I see? Pasha standing at the

door with a stick in her hands crying: 'Where are they, the czars? I am going to give them a thrashing with this stick.'

"I prostrated myself at her feet and began to implore her.

" 'Pasha, pity me, poor old woman that I am!'

"Pasha gave me a wild glance and put away the stick in the corner.

"Just then the czar and the czarina approached the cell. They held out their hands to Pasha, but she turned away and entered the adjoining room, in which she kept all her sticks. As may be imagined, I stood there more dead than alive. Presently Pasha emerged from the other room with a stocking in her hand that I had given her to knit in hope of keeping her in good temper. She looked curiously at the royal couple, then she handed the stocking to the czar, saying:

" 'Knit it! Knit it, Little Father! It is a stocking for your son.'

"Then suddenly she began to take the red candles from the candlesticks. I thought I should go mad with fright. I was sure she intended to throw the candles at the czar and czarina, but instead of this she collected them and entered the adjoining room. I followed her. She said,

" 'Let them go away; otherwise I shall give them a thrashing.' I returned to my guests and told them that they could not see Pasha again. They examined

her cell once more and left. The czarina had been pressing Pasha's gift to her breast and kissing it repeatedly."

Having told this remarkable story, the mother superior heaved a deep sigh, and added:

"Nobody knows about this. I have told it only to you out of respect for your priestly rank." I know that at the time I left Russia the czarina still preserved Pasha's stocking as a sacred relic.

First among the other saints and idiots was the barefooted wanderer Vasili Tkachenko. He was a peasant from the Kuban region, an illiterate soldier. He was old, had a giant's frame, and a long gray beard reaching to his waist. Both in summer and in winter he went barefooted, without a hat, in a light caftan. In order to prevent his feet from being frozen off, he applied fat to them. As for his body, he kept it warm by a liberal consumption of vodka. When he came to Petrograd he supported himself by going about among the cabmen, telling stories and acting like a buffoon for their amusement. He always carried a priest's staff in his hands, which weighed about fifty pounds and was adorned with a silver cross at the head. This staff caused him numerous persecutions on the part of the priests, who grudged him possession of it. Grand Duke Michael Nicolaïevich put an end to these persecutions by obtaining the czar's special written permit allowing Vasili Tkachenko to carry his staff, and Vasili was careful ever after to have the permit on his person.

It was Grand Duke Michael who introduced him to the court. During the revolution Vasili gave the czar much "useful" advice about preventing the revolutionary propaganda from reaching the soldiers and maintaining a rigid discipline in the army. He often sent telegrams to the czar and czarina from his pilgrimages, and they would reply to him by wire. With these telegrams in his possession he intimidated more than one governor and minister. It was a foolish incident that terminated Vasili's career at the court. He got drunk on one occasion and had a fight with a cabman. His star was extinguished, and he was no longer admitted to the palace. It goes without saying that the court intrigues of other saints were also largely instrumental in his downfall. In fact, a rumor was current that it was a new star, Mitia, the Blissful, who had overthrown Vasili.

Mitia was a native of Kozelsk, in the province of Kaluga. He was a cripple and could hardly articulate. He was introduced to the court by the inspector of the theological academy, Archimandrite Theophanes. He was a frequenter of the imperial palace chiefly during the revolution, and since nobody at court could understand what he was saying, he used to come with his own interpreters. In his conversations with the czar and the czarina he would knock his fist on the table and cry, "Ah-ah, fu, ay-ay, ay-ay, ay-ay!" These cow-like howlings of his were a source of many misfortunes for a whole people, the Jews, for "Ah-ah, fu, ay-ay!" in Mitia's

vernacular meant, "Let the Cossacks kill the Zidi!" By the word "Zidi" Mitia meant first the Jews, but also the revolutionists. Nicholas blindly obeyed Mitia, and used to issue orders to the minister of war and the minister of the interior to carry out the prophet's directions. I have been told that when, on January 9, 1905 (Bloody Sunday), the workers marched to the czar's palace under the leadership of the Priest Gapon, it was at the order of Mitia that they were fired upon.

In the aristocratic salons where Mitia had free access and was received with great reverence he behaved even worse than in the palace. I once met him at the house of the well-known Countess Ignatieva. Mitia was eating a soft-boiled egg, and this is how he did it. He broke the shell, poured the contents into a plate, put his hand into the plate, and licked the egg off his fingers. When he got through, he wiped his hands on my cassock, saying, "There will be a lot of money for you, a lot of money." Needless to say, despite Mitia's benediction, I received no money during my stay at Petrograd, and had to buy a new cassock.

It was Rasputin's appearance at court that brought about Mitia's downfall. I may add here that after he was discharged he began to keep watch, through his friends in the palace, over the saint's activities. Besides this, he organized a kind of bureau for registering women who in one way or another had suffered

from Gregory's exploitation. In fact, he founded an asylum for Gregory's victims.

All this, and particularly the ascendancy of Rasputin himself, would be difficult to understand were it not for the indisputably pliable, credulous, abnormal, and superstitious nature of the czar, with which many trustworthy European writers have long since familiarized the world. Melancholy and ghost-ridden as he was, in constant fear for his life, pursued by invisible hands, it was natural for him to suppose that God spoke to him through idiots, and that in consequence these idiots should often have influenced the relations of Russia with foreign powers. Fetichism and spiritualism dominated the czar's whole existence. On his person he carried all sorts of charms and talismans, the most precious of which in later years was a lock of Rasputin's hair. He wore this in a ring, and gazed upon it fixedly before making any momentous decision. Naturally, he was at the mercy of every kind of imposter. Rasputin admitted to me that he employed tricksters to keep "Papa" in an impressionable frame of mind, and that there was another way in which he maintained his power. In my first interview with the czar I noticed that his left eye and the left side of his face twitched almost constantly. This, like his epileptic fits, was believed to have been the result of the blow on the skull that he received at the hands of a crazy Japanese policeman during his visit in Tokio in 1891. Rasputin directed

his attention to this weak spot in the czar's head. He massaged the scar on Nicholas' skull for hours at a time, murmuring mystic utterances like, "Rest! rest! Thy guardian angel has his arms around thee," by this process giving relief to the nerve-racked, addle-pated monarch.

Rasputin gained his ascendancy at court owing to the passionate desire of the imperial family for an heir. While he was wandering about he had gained a wide notoriety as a holy man long before his appearance in Petrograd, and having come to the capital he was welcomed by many women of the highest rank, who were eager for his kind of emotional religion, and gladly prostrated themselves in darkened rooms, kissing the feet of the prophet. It was the Grand Duchess Militza, wife of the czar's cousin, daughter of King Nicholas of Montenegro, and sister of the Queen of Italy, who introduced him to the court. "I see on a heavenly cloud the child that will be born to Russia," the Grand Duchess Militza had heard him say, and she passed this on to the czar and the czarina.

True to Rasputin's lucky prophecy, the czarevitch was born in 1904. The result was that Rasputin was almost worshiped by the imperial family. To the indignation of the more upright of those who remained at court, he was allowed the greatest intimacy with the royal children, and he succeeded in infecting them to an alarming degree with his peculiar, distorted religiosity. He told how he had

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Sana Pistolkors
A. E. Pistolkors
Anna Viroubova
Maria Golovina
Laptinskaya

RASPUTIN SURROUNDED BY HIS COURT FOLLOWERS

"treated" the Grand Duchess Olga for her infatuation for a certain young guardsman whom she had seen at church. He said that he made her kneel before him and then, passing his hands over her, prayed in a wild way, crying, "Devil, devil, I command thee to depart!" He boasted that in this way he had completely cured her.

Having once enjoyed the luxury of court life, Rasputin was careful not to lose his control over the source of these blessings. Occasionally, as the czarevitch grew up, the empress appeared slightly weary of the holy man's eccentricities. It was for this reason that Rasputin entered into partnership with two other court personages, who were also anxious to keep in favor, in order to carry out a plot, the whole story of which in all its details he described to me in the most shameless way. His accomplices were Mme. Viroubova, the czarina's lady-in-waiting, and Dr. Badmaeff, unofficial court physician, a strange unscrupulous cynic of Tibetan family, closely related to the Grand Llama of Tibet, enormously wealthy, and versed in the mysteries of Oriental medicine. Whenever their power was waning or they needed money, they gave the little czarevitch a yellow powder that made him ill without actually endangering his life. Dr. Badmaef provided the powders while Rasputin and Viroubova found opportunities to administer them. Rasputin once told me, with a laugh, that the czar and czarina had neglected him of late, but that the "little yellow powder" would restore their

faith in him. As soon as the czarevitch became ill, Viroubova would remind Alexandra that the saint alone could restore him to health. Rasputin would appear, and the illness would immediately vanish, the powders having been discontinued. Then Rasputin would be in high favor again, and would be allowed everything he desired. Every one knows that the ambitions of the czar and the czarina had for years been centered in the birth of this boy. Anything that affected his life, therefore, offered an easy means of playing on their credulity, weak-minded as they were at best. "The czarevitch will live as long as the prophet is honored at court," was one of Rasputin's most frequent predictions. It was borne out by the fact that whenever Rasputin was temporarily under a cloud, the czarevitch fell ill. Owing to the effect of this continual taking of drugs, the czarevitch can never become a normal man. His fragility and puniness astonish every one who sees him. His face is colorless, with a tendency to become blue. The first time I met him he behaved almost like an imbecile.

But it was Rasputin's religious orgies, unholy mockeries of religion, that gave him his greatest power over the court. Many of these orgies seem almost unbelievable in modern times.

Let me sketch, for example, the practices of the mystical sect called the Chlysts, notorious in Russia, to which Rasputin belonged. My readers may then imagine what these rites became, transferred from

their peasant setting to the luxurious and splendid court, directed by Rasputin and shared in by neurotic duchesses and other ladies and favorites.

The fundamental principle of the Chlysts is that man draws nearer to God by mortifying the flesh. To this end they indulge in fantastic dancing, fasting, and racking their nerves to the point of exhaustion. The sect derives its name from the Russian word *chlyst,* which means a whip, flagellation being one of the features of their rites. They carry this to excess. In 1890, I remember, nineteen Chlysts were buried alive by their fellow-devotees, who were seeking in this way to carry the mortification of the flesh to its logical extreme.

The worshipers meet at night, for the most part without clothes, and armed with switches. In the center of the meeting-room there is a barrel of water; unbleached linen covers the floor. Occasionally a fire is made of certain herbs that produce fantastically colored lights. The devotees crawl toward the barrel, filling the air with strange chants and ejaculations. Rasputin repeated one of these chants to me:

> I come creeping—
> Creeping over new linen;
> I come creeping,
> Seeking the new Savior.

The worshipers, male and female, no sooner reach the barrel than they begin splashing water over one another and whipping one another, the excitement

growing every moment more intense. It is an infernal scene, the air filled with shouts, howls, cries, prayers, and exclamations like: "The leader is coming! He will whip you! I will whip you! Whip me, Brother! Whip me, Sister! Here is Jerusalem! O Lord, take me!" Then they beat one another to a state of unconsciousness. They lie in heaps, exhausted. Many die as a result of these beatings and frantic embraces; while others dash out into the woods naked, and later are found dead from exposure.

A decadent society forever seeking new thrills, mainly physical, welcomed these ceremonies and added to them new refinements of degeneracy. There is no doubt that some of the most exalted ladies of the empire gave themselves up to the Chlystic rites, howling, whipping one another, throwing themselves at the feet of Rasputin, and imploring him to take them in his arms. According to Rasputin's own story, the ceremony at court was begun with a big banquet, cold eggs, cucumbers, and caviar being among the dishes served, which Gregory tasted first of all, "in order to make them holy." An altar was erected in the darkened room. There were prayers and ravings. Champagne instead of water was used for the splashing, and while they whipped one another, Rasputin admonished them: "Sin, sisters! Sin greatly, that you may confess and obtain forgiveness!" There is no question that many of the women of the court were convinced of Rasputin's divinity.

Bishop Hermogenes of Saratoff told me that on one occasion when he pointed out to a certain important lady of the court that Rasputin's practices were obviously wicked and perverse, she replied with indignation:

"Gregory is a saint. Whatever he does is right and holy."

Another of Rasputin's infamous practices was a new variety of "bath ceremonial." Having in former years gone for long periods entirely without bathing in order to acquire merit, he now carried bathing to the point of voluptuous excess. The Russian bath, as my readers know, somewhat resembles the Turkish bath, and all palaces and large houses are fitted with the most elaborate arrangements for it. Of what occurred at Rasputin's bath ceremonials I can only hint in the most general terms, though many of the scenes that occurred there have been described to me by women who had overcome their temporary madness. The bath-room was filled with incense, perfumes, and steam, and illuminated with dim red lights. There was at first the usual pretense of a religious ceremony; then the devotees fell on one another, striking one another with oak twigs, and uttering wild imprecations and prayers. They drank immense quantities of champagne, for the exhausting heat of the steam gave them an insatiable thirst.

Rasputin's saintly activity consisted chiefly in curing people of libidinous desires. To be able to do

this was, he asserted, a great gift bestowed upon him by God himself for his devout exercises of fasting and prayer. Rasputin treated both women and men, though of the latter the only two instances I am certain of were Innocent, bishop of Polotzk, and Czar Nicholas. But with women and girls he seemed to have an unlimited field for his "exploits," as they came to be called. I shall mention here in detail only two or three of the many cases that came to my personal attention.

Chionia Berlatzkaya, daughter of a rich and prominent general and the widow of a military engineer, a very beautiful woman, became acquainted with the saint before he had brought his special medicaments to Petrograd. At first the cure progressed well. C—— followed Gregory everywhere, visited him at Poksrovskoye, and recorded from his dictation "The Life of an Experienced Pilgrim," which I possess in manuscript and have quoted in a previous chapter of this book. Then something went wrong with their friendship; she left Gregory, confessed before Bishop Theophanes, and wrote a whole book about Rasputin's exploits, which she submitted to the czar. The reader is already familiar with the fate of this book. C——, accounting for the break, declared that once on the way to Poksrovskoye, when she was alone with the saint in a first-class carriage, he seized her and began to hug and kiss her as if she were his wife. Afterward he came over to her and said:

"Well, darling, are you feeling badly? Do you

think I have n't treated you right? You must not think so; it 's a sin. I saw the devil come out of you and jump through the window, so help me God! I, too, will pray with you." This was their last prayer together. Soon afterwards C—— made the whole affair public and left the saint.

Gregory, of course, without fear or reproach, went out in search of new patients for himself. Chief among these was Olga Vladimirovna Lochtina, whose name appears so often in this book that it is necessary for me to speak of her in detail.

Mme. Lochtina was the wife of a counselor of state. She was a proud, clever, highly educated woman of unusually stubborn disposition who, before her acquaintance with the saint, had been considered virtually the first lady in society for her beauty and her exquisite gowns. She devoted herself to Rasputin partly, at least, in order to acquire with him power over the czar and the czarina, and inasmuch as only "prophets" and "prophetesses" could exert this influence, she soon began to play the part of one of these. She left her husband, her two sons, and her daughter Lada, and began to wear queer dresses, decorating herself from head to foot with all kinds of ribbons, crosses, and ikons. She wore a hat of camel's hair with the inscription, "In me lies all power. Hallelujah!" In this attire she would come to the palace, where she spent all her time drinking tea with the imperial family, and interpreting the wise sayings and prophecies of Father Gregory. She drew from

Nicholas and Alexandra an income of from fifteen to twenty thousand rubles a year. She was known in court circles as "Holy Mother Olga."

When Rasputin found a more acceptable lieutenant in Anna Viroubova, the czar and the czarina had to part with Mme. Lochtina, for the saint's orders outweighed all personal attachments and sympathies. She reconciled herself to this turn of fate and continued to follow Rasputin, keeping a most detailed record of his activity and expressing in her diaries her profound worship of his personality. Six volumes of these diaries are now in my possession, and I am indebted to them for much of my information about Rasputin's activities. On the ground of an alleged prophecy of Dostoyevsky that God himself would come in our days to save Russia in the guise of an humble peasant, Lochtina imagined Gregory to be the Lord of Hosts and herself the Holy Virgin. All the efforts of Bishop Hermogenes and myself to prove to her the sacrilegiousness of her teachings were of no avail. She finally insisted on her theory. Even Rasputin tried to persuade her that he was not God, and wrote to her, "I beg you, stop dreaming," and, "Stay more at home, speak less, do not seek God on earth in the twentieth century." It made no difference. She kept on preaching before everybody that Gregory was God incarnate. The saint's wife was very jealous of Lochtina, and there were family scenes on her account. Both Gregory and Paraskovia emphatically denied it, but Lochtina, describing

POSTCARD WRITTEN BY RASPUTIN TO MADAME LOCHTINA

Petrograd: Greek Prospect, 113, Apartment 7, Lochtina: "Stay more at home and speak less. Do not seek God on earth in the twentieth century"

in her diaries her stay at Poksrovskoye, states that Paraskovia Theodorovna beat her and drove her outside the gate, shouting, "I won't let you kiss Father Gregory again!" Despite everything, Lochtina enjoyed the full respect of the imperial family. I have the original of the telegram from the yacht *Standard* in which they, over Viroubova's signature, "Anna," congratulated her on her name-day. The telegram was sent on July 12, 1913.

Later Lochtina lived in my neighborhood, which displeased Rasputin very much. He wrote her many scolding letters about it. Here is a transcript of one of them:

> You frightful woman, you accursed carrion, why do you live near Sergius the renegade? He, the devil, deserves anathema, anathema, anathema. And you, vile creature, stay there. I'll smash your face till you bleed. Yes, Gregory. Yes!

It was Anna Viroubova, the elder daughter of A. S. Taneyev and lady-in-waiting to the czarina, a young and very pretty woman, who succeeded Lochtina in the saint's affections. According to him, she left her husband because he used to beat and torture her. The real reason probably lay in the fact that the czarina had taken such a liking to her that she could scarcely eat or sleep without her. It became necessary to get rid of her husband. How was this to be done? The saint appeared and arranged everything. He "expelled the devil" from her, and she forgot her husband. Then Viroubova settled near

the palace at Tsarskoe Selo in a small, modest apartment where the saint made his headquarters and where, as my readers know, I was presented to the czarina. All the personal letters, telegrams, and orders of the czar and the czarina passed from Rasputin through Viroubova. She performed her duties punctiliously.

I now wish to give you a few instances of the power that Gregory Rasputin exercised in the affairs of church and state. I mention only cases of which I have close personal knowledge. I have in my possession documentary proofs of the majority of these cases.

Everybody knows how excited Russia was when the press, reactionary and progressive alike, carried on a many-sided discussion about the causes of Hermogenes's exile to the monastery of Jirovitsky and mine to the Floritshev Hermitage. I shall tell my readers about this in the next chapter. Everybody agreed that our exile was the saint's doing. Everybody felt highly indignant over it.

Under the pressure of public opinion, the Imperial Duma, discussing in February or March, 1912, the budget of the Holy Synod, sharply questioned the part Rasputin had been playing in church and state affairs. On this occasion many speeches, full of passion and indignation, were delivered. Stirred by these speeches the Duma resolved to send immediate inquiries about the saint's activities to the minister of justice, Scheglovitov, and the minister of the inte-

rior, Makarov. The inquiries were submitted, and every one breathed a sigh of relief, expecting that they would result in the indictment of Rasputin, who was felt to be fatal both for Russia and for the dynasty.

But the whole affair suddenly came to naught, was hushed up, died. At first the people were amazed; later, as usual, they forgot all about it.

It was in 1913, when perusing Lochtina's diaries, that the question as to why nothing had been heard of these inquiries became clear to me. I discovered that while the Duma, in a high state of excitement, was making its inquiries, the holy man was sitting at Poksrovskoye and scribbling the most unthinkable scrawl to "Papa" and "Mama." A copy of this letter, as well as of many other celebrated letters, Lochtina recorded in her diaries, probably to a certain extent correcting Rasputin's spelling.

Here is the letter:

Darling Papa and Mama:

The cursed devil is overpowering. And the Duma serves him. It contains many revolutionists and Jews. What do they care? All they want is to overthrow the anointed sovereign. And their boss, Guchkov, slanders and sows sedition. Inquests! Papa, the Duma is yours; you may do with it anything you please. Don't heed any inquests about Gregory. It 's the devil's mischief. Give your orders. No inquests.

GREGORY.

After this letter, the inquests were taken off the

order of the day and buried. I should like to add here Rasputin's general opinion of the Duma as I frequently heard him express it. I used to ask him:

"How about the Duma? Does n't it embarrass the czar?"

"Nonsense! Nastiness!" he would reply. "Who is going to listen to the Duma? Papa assembled a few dogs there so that the other dogs would stay where they belong and stop barking. And I tell him all the time that the Duma is entirely unnecessary. But he seems to be afraid. There is going to be trouble. Well, I 'll see to it that there will be no Duma."

During the Turco-Balkan War the question of Russia's interference in the conflict of the Slavs and the Turks became very acute. Everybody expected decisive steps on Russia's part in favor of her Balkan brethren, but nothing happened. What was the cause? Here it is.

I was in confinement then. Lochtina came to the Floritshev Hermitage. As her habit was, she walked over to the window of my cell, facing the forest.

"Where have you come from, Olga?" I asked.

"From Poksrovskoye. I 've been there all the time." She opened her diaries and began to read in the guards' presence how she spent her time visiting the saint.

I interrupted her.

"Olga, have you read the papers?" I asked. "How about the war?"

"What could there be about the war? They are fighting, and Father Gregory's view of the situation is well known: 'Russia must not interfere because there is trouble at home; there are many internal enemies.'"

"What has that rascal's opinion to do with it?" I purposely emphasized my negative relation to Gregory.

Lochtina, as though not hearing that epithet with regard to her "Lord of Hosts," continued imperturbably:

"And the royal family have already been notified about his view. Of course, they won't dare disobey." Russia did not interfere.

And here is what Gregory himself told me about the Russian-Japanese War while I was staying with him at Poksrovskoye:

"Papa sent Witte somewhere, I don't know where, to conclude peace with the Japanese. Well, in the evening, at about ten o'clock I go out through this gate, and it is so dark, so dark! I look upward and, behold! the Holy Virgin in heaven, with swords in her hand, turns from the Russians to the Japanese! I say to myself, 'This means we are going to be victorious now.' I run to the station and wire in my own words that Papa and Mama should conclude no peace, but wait for me. I received an answer that they could not wait more than three or four days. I went to them, but the train was late. When I got there Witte had already concluded peace."

When Rasputin finished this stupendous story, his wife Paraskovia, who was present at our conversation, said:

"I have your letter, Father, which you sent us from Tumen with the news that you missed the train."

At my request she brought me the letter, and I asked Rasputin's permission to take it as a souvenir. It is now preserved among my documents relating to this book. Had the saint arrived on time, another hundred thousand or more of our brothers would have fallen on the fields of Manchuria. Whether victory, as the saint predicted, would have been won or not is of course hard to say, and to take his word for it is rather risky. But is it not astonishing, such an easy, saintly way of solving complicated and awful questions involving hundreds of thousands of precious human lives?

The ministers were like snow in Rasputin's hands.

Having returned me from Minsk to Tsaritzin, Gregory, according to his own words, insisted on the removal of Sergius Lukjanov from the post of high procurator of the Holy Synod. But Lukjanov was not removed because Rasputin had no suitable person to replace him with just then. When, however, the emperor, principally upon Gregory's order from Jerusalem, returned me from Novosil to Tsaritzin, Lukjanov, the protégé of Stolypin, was immediately removed.

This is how the saint spoke to me about it:

"I told Papa and Mama that it was necessary to

chase away Lukjanov, Stolypin's hanger-on, and that they were too slow about it; that if they had obeyed me there would have been no such scandal with you. That was all Lukjanov's doing, and he must be discharged."

In his place Rasputin put Wladimir Sabler. After Sabler, Rasputin promoted to the post of assistant high procurator Piotr Damansky, an upstart, a sly, pliant man, ready to sacrifice everything for his career. In the exile which befell Hermogenes and me for unmasking Rasputin, Damansky played a conspicuous part. He did everything in his power for Rasputin, whose great friend he was, although he was fully aware of all the saint's obscene activities. Whenever newspaper men asked him, "What is the Synod going to do about the exploits of Gregory Ephimovich?" Damansky would reply, "All those exploits are buried in oblivion."

Rasputin's dearest friend was Count Witte, whom he always called "Wittia." Whenever he came to Petrograd he called on Witte without fail, and Witte also came to see him. Rasputin considered Witte a very clever and noble-hearted man, and Witte, in his turn, down to his last days, knowing of Gregory's exploits, insisted that Rasputin's was a lofty soul, that he was a man of great virtues and exceptional mind.

For a long while, dating from the time of Witte's downfall at court, the saint had been endeavoring to obtain a high position for Witte; but his efforts had

been in vain. In 1912, when I was at the Floritshev Hermitage, G. P. Sazonov, who must have caught the spirit of prophecy from Rasputin, said to my brother Apollo:

"Just wait. Gregory Ephimovich will soon make Witte premier and replace the old ministers by new ones, and then will come the end of Hermogenes and Iliodor for their revolt against the autocracy. Witte will teach them a lesson."

In 1914, the new ministers, if not Witte, went far indeed in this direction.

Count Tatischev, while governor of Saratoff, persecuted me relentlessly for unmasking the mercenary representatives of the Government and noblemen in general. Together with Stolypin, he kept scheming to remove me from his province, from Tsaritzin. About this he wrote a memorable letter to the czar. Finally, at Gregory's orders, he was removed from his post and obliged to retire "to milk the cows and count the chickens," as Rasputin put it.

A year elapsed. I began my struggle with Gregory himself. Seeking vengeance, the saint began to collect from their secluded nooks the administrators whom he had formerly "punished" on account of me. Thus, soon after my banishment to the Floritshev Hermitage, Count Tatischev received the high appointment of chief of the press department.

In 1913, when I had retired to my birthplace, I

solved the puzzle. In Mme: Lochtina's diaries I found a copy of the following letter from Rasputin to the imperial family:

My darlings:

Mistakes must also be corrected, and God's grace will be with us. Count Tatischev was exasperated because of the rebels. Now we must be nice to him and give him a high post. I myself used to be against him, but am no longer. I was mistaken in Hermogenes and Iliodor. So it is.

GREGORY.

The saint's foremost and strongest enemy among the ministers was Stolypin. Stolypin would not leave the "poor ascetic" alone, but pestered him with his secret-service men. Rasputin conceived the most violent hatred for Stolypin, whom he sought to overthrow, hoping to appoint his friend W. N. Kokovzev,[1] in his place. The saint's desire became so intense that he could not restrain himself any longer and, according to his own words quoted to me in December, 1911, he "predicted" on August 24 of that year the appointment of Kokovzev as Premier. But about Stolypin? Seven days later he was assassinated in the theater at Kieff.

The question of Stolypin's assassination has not yet been solved. I do not undertake to solve it, because that is not my specialty, but I recommend the task to the famous Vladimir Burtzeff, the worthy and disinterested foe of czarism, who exposed Azeff. Let him busy himself with Stolypin's assassination

1 Kokovzev became Premier in 1913.

and make clear what part the saintly prediction, seven days before Kokovzev became premier, played in it. Meanwhile, I will go on with my proper task, proving by facts, and facts alone, that Gregory was not only the Emperor of Russia, but also the Patriarch of the Russian Church. The following cases show him in the latter rôle:

Grand Duke Nicholas Nicolaïevich, although, according to the testimony of A. I. Dubrovin, he had a passionate friendship for an actress, hesitated to live without the Church's blessing with Anastasia Nicolaïevna, daughter of the King of Montenegro. As soon as he became intimate with her he began to petition for a license to marry. He applied to Metropolitan Anthony, who refused. He applied to the Synod, with the same result. Then, according to Rasputin, he applied to the Patriarch of Constantinople, only to be refused again. The grand duke was annoyed, and "Nastia," as the saint always called her, was wasting away with sorrow. She was ashamed to live with the duke without wedlock.

Then Rasputin interceded and helped them out. He said to them:

"You will be carrying on anyway; you had better go to Livadia and arrange for a quiet wedding there."

They went, with Gregory's blessing.

Thus the saint proved to be higher and more powerful than the patriarch himself. The patriarch, despite the handsome sum of money he would have

received for his "blessing,"—something Greeks are very fond of,—did not dare to break the church laws prohibiting two brothers to marry two sisters. But the saint did dare for the consideration of a six-hundred-ruble Persian rug! The reader will remember this rug in a previous chapter of my book. Shortly after the wedding, Nastia turned the saint out, and ceased presenting him with gifts. She had got what she was after, and would have nothing more to do with Gregory.

Archimandrite Theophanes, an enlightened ascetic, presented the saint at court and was on friendly terms with him for several years. He used to take his advice in the most trivial matters. He would ask Gregory, for instance, what color of socks to buy. Rasputin paid Theophanes very liberally for his friendship. He promoted him to a bishopric and made him rector of the first theological seminary in Russia and the czar's confessor.

Theophanes had been confessor for two years when, visiting Gregory at Poksrovskoye, he began to see that something was wrong. On his return to Petrograd he confessed a few of the ladies and young girls whom Gregory had "consecrated." Then the devil of hatred against Gregory took possession of him. As a God-fearing and honest man, Theophanes rose against Rasputin. He told the czarina about the saint's exploits, and said that he ought to be removed from the court and confined at Poksrovskoye. But the czarina is not a fool; she

was not to be caught in a trap by Theophanes. She dismissed him abruptly. He was then expelled from the seminary and banished first to the Tavrida diocese, then to Astrachan, and finally to Poltava.

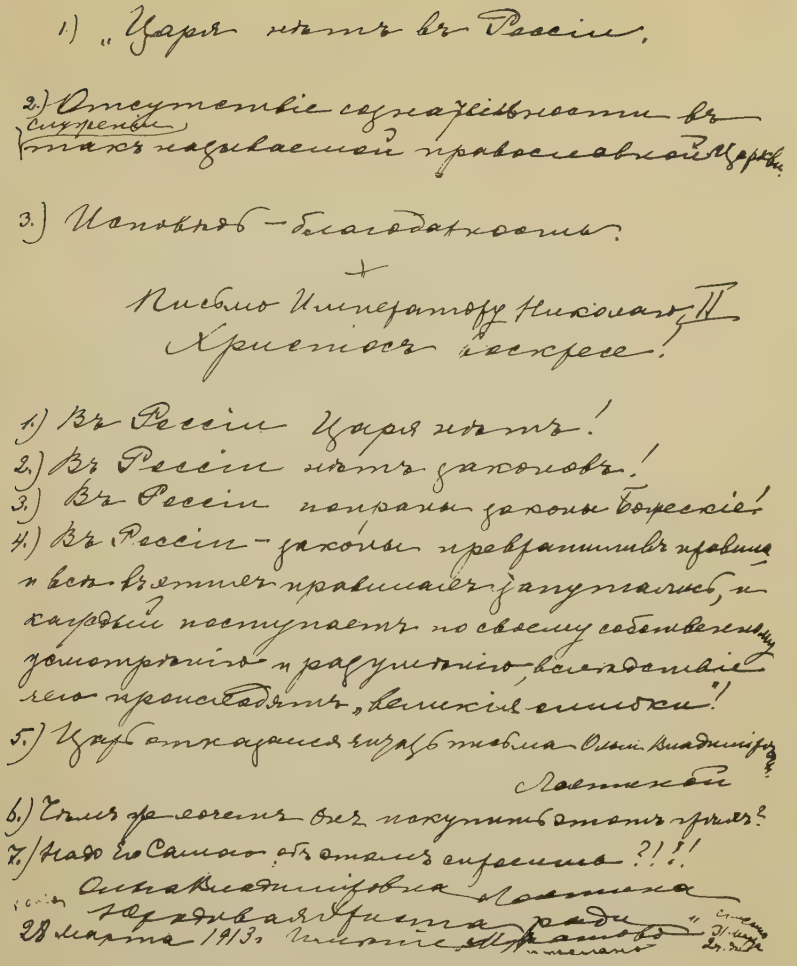
The saint on meeting me shortly afterward spoke of Theophanes thus:

"The accursed one will rot away, he will. He 'll rot away alive. The loophole is closed—closed forever."

"How can you talk that way about a bishop?" I asked indignantly.

"Why did he sling mud at me? But he did n't succeed—he only drowned himself in the mire."

At the time of the banishment of Bishop Hermogenes and myself the following were sitting in the Synod: Metropolitans Vladimir of Moscow and Flavian of Kieff, Archbishops Seraphim of Tver, Anthony of Volhynia, Sergius of Finland, Nazarius of Odessa, and Nickon, formerly of Vologda. They were all trying to play into the hands of Nicholas and Alexandra, being well aware that the latter, as the reader shall see from the next chapter, had exiled us solely for exposing their prophet Rasputin. Soon afterward all these prelates received rewards from Nicholas and Alexandra, not all at once, but one after another, at short intervals of time. Vladimir received a benevolence, and Flavian a candle for use during service; Anthony was made permanent member of the Synod, Sergius was given a diamond cross for his cowl, Nazarius received the order of St.



1) „Царя нѣтъ въ Россіи.

2.) Отсутствіе справедливости въ (строгости) нашей православной Церкви.

3.) Исповѣдь — благодатность.

+

Письмо Императору Николаю II.

Христосъ воскресе!

1.) Въ Россіи Царя нѣтъ!
2.) Въ Россіи нѣтъ законовъ!
3.) Въ Россіи попраны законы Божескіе!
4.) Въ Россіи — законы превратились въ формы и всѣ въ оныхъ правилахъ запутались, и каждый поступаетъ по своему собственному усмотрѣнію и разумѣнію, всѣ видятъ это происходящее, но всѣ молчатъ!
5.) Царь отказался читать письма ко мнѣ Ольги Владимировны Лохтиной.
6.) Какъ Ему за это будетъ искупить свои грѣхи?
7.) Надо Его самого объ этомъ спросить?!!

Ольга Владимировна Лохтина
Подвижница Христа ради
28 марта 1913г. Имѣніе Муратово

PAGE FROM MADAME LOCHTINA'S DIARIES

Six volumes of these original diaries are now in possession of Father Iliodor.

Translation, beginning at line 5—draft of a letter to the Czar:—

"Letter to Czar Nicholas II.

Christ is risen!

1. Russia has no Czar!
2. Russia has no laws!
3. In Russia the laws of God are scorned!
4. In Russia the laws have become formulas and everyone is in confusion; everyone acts according to his own judgment, with the result that great errors are committed!
5. The Czar refuses to read the letters of Olga Vladimirovna Lochtina.
6. How does he mean to expiate this sin?
7. I must ask him this? I!

Olga Vladimirovna Lochtina, devotee for Christ's sake. March 28, 1913. Estate of Muratovo."

Alexander Nevski, and Seraphim and Nickon were promoted to archbishoprics.

I believe that in the whole history of the Russian Church during the synodical era there had never been a case in which all the members of the Synod in one session received rewards at virtually the same time. A strange occurrence! But one glimpse into the diaries of Lochtina, who recorded every word and step of her "Lord of Hosts," will suffice to explain this complicated problem. The diaries contain the following letter from Rasputin:

Darling Papa and Mama:

The darling bishops dealt the devil a fine blow. They chastised the rebels against God's anointed. That 's the right way. Now we must be nice to them. Reward them, only not all at once. First one, then another. Otherwise the dogs Hermogenes and Iliodor will raise a howl. Yes, it is necessary. I, Gregory, am writing this. Yes. You must be nice to them for what they have done.

GREGORY.

The career of Barnaby, Bishop of Tobolsk, is in the highest degree picturesque. He was a peasant, a market gardener from Kargopol. There was nothing remarkable about him.

In February, 1907, at the home of Dr. Dubrovin, Lieutenant Ivanov spoke to me about this man as follows:

"Little Father, do you happen to know a certain Archimandrite Barnaby, Father superior of a monastery near Moscow? Well, he is certainly a

rascal. All he cares about is to make trips to Petrograd and spend his time in drawing-rooms. I know him. I also have visited him in his cells. You look around and everything seems cloister-like; then he opens a little cupboard under the ikons, and you see there all kinds of things—cognac, rum, the best vodka, salmon, and all kinds of dried sturgeon and sausage. He invited me and a friend of mine once, and the three of us helped ourselves to everything."

Months passed. I forgot about Archimandrite Barnaby. There are so many different kinds of monks. Did the lieutenant expect me to be astonished? I have met worse specimens. But Barnaby actually proved to be a specimen of specimens. In 1909, at Tsaritzin, Rasputin said to me one day, among other things:

"Do you know Archimandrite Barnaby, Iliodorushka? Mama keeps on talking to me about him. 'Gregory,' she says, 'I don't know what to do with that marmot Barnaby. He comes to me, falls at my feet, gets hold of them with both hands, kisses them, and keeps on repeating: "Mother-Czarina, Mother-Czarina, make me a bishop! I want to be a bishop." What can I do with him? He has annoyed me several times like that.' "

"Well, and what has been the result?" I asked.

"Mama said, 'Gregory, I 'll do as you say,' and I said to her, 'Although the archbishops will feel insulted if a peasant is thrust among them,—the academicians!—it does n't matter a snap. They 'll

get used to it. The marmot must be made a bishop. He stands up for me."

If I remember rightly it was at the beginning of 1911 that the "marmot" was made a bishop. There was a great scandal. The members of the Synod refused to confer the rank upon Barnaby because he had had no education. But "Mama" insisted through Sabler, the procurator. Barnaby was sent as bishop to Kargopol. Later he felt bored in this small, far-away town. He was appointed to the diocese where Rasputin was born, to the cathedral of Tobolsk. A peasant, a market gardener appointed to the ancient cathedral that metropolitans used to occupy! The case is satisfactorily explained in Lochtina's diaries. They contain the following letter from the saint to the imperial family:

Darling Papa and Mama:

Many cares, but no success. Troubled as to whom to send to Siberia. But he 's right here, Bishop Barnaby, my friend and protector. He is needed here. He is zealous in his endeavors.

GREGORY.

A short while before, when the cathedral in the Ekaterinburg diocese became vacant, Gregory wrote the czar about Barnaby as follows:

My darling.

Wisdom! Can't you send our mutual friend to Ekaterinburg independently?—he prays ardently and is ready-witted. I have not seen him, and do not know whether he wants it or not, but he 's worthy. Yes. It would be good

for him there. You, my darling, please don't feel insulted that I don't mind my own business. Yes. Forgive me. GREGORY. I pray and kiss you.[1]

Barnaby did not land at Ekaterinburg for the simple reason that Gregory had not asked his consent, but he did land at Tobolsk. And Barnaby, the "marmot," having got into his hole, began to ridicule without mercy the educated priests of the Tobolsk diocese. When Rasputin was wounded by Chionia Gosiva, he exclaimed, "Pray for God's faithful servant!"

In 1913, owing to the transfer of Vladimir to Petrograd, the Moscow metropolitan cathedral became vacant. People began to make guesses as to who would be appointed in his place. Public opinion selected the conspicuous candidates, Sergius of Finland and Anthony of Volhynia. A contest began between them, the partizans of both trying their best to adorn their respective favorites, printing eulogies about them, inventing new virtues for them, and ascribing to them fine qualities they never possessed.

Suddenly, against all expectations, Nicholas appointed as the Makarius metropolitan of Moscow, a man with no more than a seminary education, an accommodating old fellow. Everybody was astounded at this appointment—astounded, because they did not know that Makarius had for a long while been a close friend of Rasputin. The saint helped out the

[1] Lochtina's diaries.

poor, frail old man from the gorges of Altai and placed him in the cathedral of the famous Philaretus, and in the place of Makarius he transferred to Tomsk another friend of his, Meletiy, Bishop of Barnaoul, who had once made Gregory a penitent and commanded him to travel and to "perform saintly exploits."

About this appointment of Makarius Rasputin wrote to Nicholas and Alexandra as follows:

> Darling Papa and Mama:
> Much noise, much quarreling, and it is all vanity. Whom shall we send to Moscow? Not Anthony; he's crafty and young. There will be envy and animosity. And that 's all the devils need. Here is the man you want to appoint, the Altai ascetic Markarius, my friend. God's man. Appoint him. Yes.
>
> GREGORY.[1]

Is it necessary for me to mention other instances in order to show the amazing power attained by this common, pock-marked Russian peasant, forty-eight years of age? He was, without doubt, a prophet, a clairvoyant. The force which he himself described to the writer Rodionov as "electricity" emanated through his hands and principally through his gray, unpleasant, fixed, piercing eyes. With this force he subdued every weak and impressionable soul. He achieved his success mainly in the lowest and in the highest spheres. Among the middle classes he was not popular. The reason is that both at the bottom

[1] Lochtina's diaries.

and the top people seek God. The lowly seek God in order to forget themselves in dreams of a future better life. People of the higher spheres indulge in mysticism owing to their satiety. Having relished all earthly things, it is their curiosity that prompts them to explore the realm of the unknown. In the middle classes, on the other hand, people are too absorbed in the cares of their daily existence to feel this curiosity, while their life is not so burdensome that it necessitates appealing to Heaven for help.

Rasputin kept his claws fastened firmly about the imperial family by repeating again and again, "If I am not near you, the heir will die." To sustain his authority outside of the court he made use of all his skill and craftiness. He displayed the highest degree of impudence. People openly exposed him, merciless accusers appeared against him; but he went on more and more recklessly, as if nothing had happened, rising higher and higher, proclaiming himself a wonder-worker intrusted by God with a special mission on earth. So vain was he that he was continually posing before painters and moving-picture operators; he provided himself with minions and obedient newspaper men, who gave him exaggerated write-ups, describing his audiences which, they said, had more petitioners than those of the ministers. He distributed money, but not so lavishly as his "sworn reporters" said. He was much fonder of depositing his money in the bank.

And the saint went on, imitating the etiquette of

the court. He went skipping about, heels forward, clad in his silk shirt, costly trousers, and bottle-like boots, seeking new friends, curing the "sick," expelling lewd devils, dismissing and appointing ministers and bishops, ruling the great empire and the Russian Church.

And he kept on repeating with a preoccupied air: "Oh, how busy I am! Oh, how busy!"

PART III

MY STRUGGLE WITH RASPUTIN

CHAPTER I

WE UNMASK THE "HOLY DEVIL"

AND now for the third act of my drama. It is the story of my long struggle with Rasputin and the powers of darkness that hedged him round in the church and the state. Why did I turn against him? My enemies of course pretended that it was because I desired to take his place, but this was not true. How far from true it was I leave my American readers to decide.

Quackery never holds out for long. Had Rasputin been a quack to begin with, we should never have heard of him. There are thousands of quack saints in Russia who wind up as beggars and outcasts. Rasputin was not of this kind; I wish to make that clear. In the beginning he was an honest, earnest man, a seeker after God. But have you ever seen a man apparently in the best of health who was being inwardly devoured by a cancer? Such a man was Rasputin. The cancer of lust and degeneracy ravaged him within, although it took years and the cumulative evidence of years before that cancer ate its way to the surface, and the evil nature of the man had entirely displaced the good. Then there was no saving Rasputin. The only thing to do was to save

others from coming into contact with him. That is what I attempted, and for that I suffered exile from Russia. Let me reveal now all the steps leading to this tragic climax.

According to the testimony of Mitia the Blissful, Bishop Theophanes, virtually the oldest of Rasputin's friends, had long been aware of the exploits of the saint. Several times he had compelled him to take an oath at the ikon never to touch women and to behave decently.

Rasputin had taken these oaths, but he would not or could not forsake his "healing art." Theophanes forebore going any further, perhaps fearing him, perhaps expecting that some day he would make amends; but as time went on, a storm of indignation against Rasputin began to rise in his soul.

In January,1910, without coming out openly, he launched a campaign against him. As his assistant he selected the sub-professor of the seminary, the priest Benjamin, already known to the reader. The papers, though very warily, began to attack Rasputin.

Shortly after he had visited me at Tsaritzin and had returned to Petrograd, Rasputin sent me the following letter:

Darling: You did not notice anything bad about me when I was at Tsaritzin, did you? Theophanes and Benjamin keep on slinging mud at me. All I did at Tsaritzin was to be nice to the people; that was all. Defend me.

GREGORY.

It was true that I had not seen anything incriminating about him at Tsaritzin except his kisses, which had a religious precedent and I had not believed Father Peter Ostroumov's stories about Gregory. Consequently I began to defend my friend and benefactor without having any selfish interests in view. I defended him desperately. His kisses and bath-house escapades I ascribed to his impassibility, for I sincerely believed the saint when he told me that to him a woman was no more than a manikin. On two consecutive Sunday evenings I delivered two-hour speeches before five thousand people in defense of him. Without knowing it, I was committing a great sin in the temple of the living God, at the altar of the heavenly king. The people believed me, because they always loved and respected me. The gentleman of the bedchamber, A. E. Pistolkors, wired me from Petrograd, asking me to write the sermons out and send them to him for "Papa" and "Mama." I, who as a rule never recorded my sermons, wrote out my defense of Rasputin and sent it to Pistolkors. He replied to the effect that the czar and the czarina had read the sermons and liked them very much; but they were not liked by L. Tichomiroff and the writer M. A. Novoseloff, whom I had attacked for "insulting brother Gregory," and they especially displeased Stolypin.

Stolypin, who had then severed all relations with Rasputin, twice appeared before the Holy Synod with his opinion concerning my sermons in the saint's

defense, and the Synod sent my superior, Bishop Hermogenes, two decrees about them. All the decrees contained was a corroboration of the fact that at such and such a time I had defended Gregory Rasputin at the monastery church, but there was no indication whether I was adjudged guilty for this either by Stolypin or by the Synod.

After the days of the defense were over, at the end of January, 1910, I received from Benjamin two letters. This is what he wrote to me:

Dear Father Iliodor:

I am writing to you at Master Theophanes's request. Both of us implore you not to defend Gregory, that veritable devil and rake. We swear by the Almighty that his obscene deeds were revealed at his confession to Master Theophanes. The ladies maltreated by him, and the girls Vishniakova and Timofeeva dishonored by him, testify against him. He, the son of Satan, took us to the bath-house and purposely assured us that he was impassionate. It was not till afterwards that we understood he was lying and deceiving us. Believe us, and do not defend him any more. Affectionately yours,

BENJAMIN.

Almost simultaneously with these letters a Tsaritzin lady by the name of Potugina, who had a young, pretty married daughter living with her, came to me and said:

"Dear Father, we have learned something bad about Father Gregory. We sent an inquiry about him to Bishop Theophanes at Petrograd. Here is his reply." I took the letter and read:

Sister Barbara, God save you from having anything to do with Gregory Rasputin. He is a true disciple of the devil.

BISHOP THEOPHANES.

Having read Benjamin's letters and Theophanes's letter to Potugina, I wrote to Rasputin, asking for an explanation. He replied:

My darling Iliodorushka:

Don't believe the slanderers. They are libeling me. And do you know why? Out of envy. I am nearer to the imperial family than they are; the czar and czarina love me very much and care nothing for them. That 's why they have risen against me, that 's why they are planning to overthrow me. Don't you believe them. This sin will be their undoing. The loophole will be closed for Theophanes.

GREGORY.

This time I did not believe Gregory. Doubt had taken possession of my heart. I awaited new explanations, and presently I received from Petrograd or Poksrovskoye, I cannot remember which, the following telegram: "Papa has promised a golden cowl for you. GREGORY." What thoughts came to me on reading the telegram I do not remember, but the memorable visit paid to me shortly afterward by the Nun Xenia Goncharova put an end to my indecision and erected forever a barrier between Gregory and me.

From that day on I prayed continually to God to rid me of the saint who knew how to keep his friends ensnared. At the same time I began to take practi-

cal steps for my safety, realizing that to turn against Rasputin meant to turn against the czar, and that it would involve a bitter fight which might end in the loss of my monastery. I said to myself, "If I cannot fight him above ground, I will try to fight him under the ground." Accordingly, I began to have passages dug at a depth of ten yards under the monastery. Four thousand of my followers volunteered for this service; they worked for four months, night and day, in ten-hour shifts, on these subterranean passages and chambers. When the authorities learned of this work they asked me for an explanation. "I am digging graves," I said. The Russian press immediately sounded the alarm, and editorials were written entitled, "What is Iliodor Doing?" and "Iliodor is Getting Ready for Something."

Meanwhile, anticipating great trouble for himself and for his imperial friends, owing to Theophanes having come out against him and to the great commotion this had raised, Gregory undertook an energetic vindication of himself. Having come to Petrograd he wrote to Viroubova:

Greetings, dear heavenly virgin! And what have I to brag of? Illnesses. May God reward you for the blissfulness of your purity! Written by Gregory, your pilgrim, desecrated by everybody. Would like to see you. Have put up at the Sazonovs.

To Theophanes he wrote ingratiatingly:

Bless me, O Master, unworthy as I am, and forgive me. I

A GROUP OF FATHER ILIODOR'S FOLLOWERS

They volunteered to dig the underground passages beneath the Tsaritzin Monastery. Father Iliodor can be seen in the centre, forward, wearing his mitre

bow before your rank. If I have aggrieved you, pray and forgive; let us remember the good words, and forget the evil, and pray. Great as the devil's wiles may be, God's mercy is greater. Forgive and bless me, as a former adherent. Written by Gregory.

And let me quote here from Lochtina's diaries, two of the many other letters he wrote to important personages:

To Anthony, Archbishop of Volhynia:

Bless me, Master; take no offense. I shall do you no harm, and if in your opinion I have fallen, pray for me. You are our shepherds; you watch over us by your admonitions. Pray for sinful Gregory, and let the Jews call me names. Written by Gregory the worthless.

To Anthony, Metropolitan of Petrograd:

Bless me, darling Master, and forgive me. I should like to see you, and I would gladly receive your admonition. There is much gossip. I am guilty. I have given cause, but I 'm not a sectarian, but a son of the Orthodox Church. Everything hinges on my visiting the august personages. There lies the cause of my sufferings. I cannot answer the abuse of the papers.

Rasputin worked so effectively at court that he soon brought about Theophanes's downfall. The bishop was exiled from the apartments of the empress and deprived of his high rank as imperial confessor. Afterward he was banished from Petrograd.

At the beginning of December, 1911, I went to Petrograd from Tsaritzin to buy a printing-press and to obtain permission to publish at the monastery

the magazine "Life and Salvation" and the newspaper "Thunder and Lightning." In Petrograd I stayed at the hostelry of the Jaroslavl Monastery. Bishop Hermogenes was at that time a member of the Holy Synod, and at his house I used to meet every day Mitia the Blissful and the writer I. A. Rodionov, both of whom were telling incredible things about Gregory and his activities at court, Rodionov quoting Czheglovitoff, and Mitia, Prince Putiatin and Prince Orlov, with whom Gregory had formerly been on very friendly terms.

On December 12 or 13, when Hermogenes was away at a meeting of the Synod, a courier brought me a telegram, saying as he handed it to me, "The telegram is addressed to the bishop, but its text is not for him, so the telegraph official told me." In order to make sure that I was not intercepting somebody else's telegram, I opened it and read: "My darling Master, I was there; they are sending you their best regards. They ask you not to talk to Theophanes and Fedchenko (Benjamin). Shall be back in a couple of days. GREGORY."

I reassured the courier and he left. Gregory had sent the telegram from Moscow on his way from Livadia, where he had been present at the celebration of Nicholas's name-day, December 6. In the telegram he was conveying the imperial family's regards to Hermogenes. When Hermogenes came home from the Synod, I handed him the telegram. He read, spat on it, and said to me:

"There 's a dog. May the Lord forgive me! We must get rid of him."

"I have been insisting on this for a long time, Master."

"What shall we do, then?"

"The affair is a very serious and complicated one. It was easy to commit oneself with the devil, but we shall need God's help in getting rid of him."

"We must risk everything."

"Not our monastic rank."

"That will not depend on us. If we are planning a break with the saint, we must be prepared for anything."

Hermogenes was lost in thought. Somber shadows beset his dark earnest face.

"Well, what 's to be done?" he continued after a while. "You know, I don't like the idea of suffering on account of this reptile."

"Master, this is what we shall do. We shall invite Gregory here, expose him, and lock him in the corner room; we shall let nobody see him; we shall not allow him to call up anybody. Meanwhile you go to the czar and persuade him to get rid of the saint. Prostrate yourself before him and insist that for the sake of saving the throne and Russia it is necessary to keep Rasputin in his Siberian hole. Of course if we release Gregory after the exposure we are lost. I don't know what you mean to do when he attacks us, assisted by his friends, but I shall stop at nothing."

"That is a good idea; but we must consult the minister of justice about it."

"Very well; let us go to see him to-morrow."

We made an appointment with Czheglovitoff, and, accompanied by his friend, the writer Rodionov, we went to see him on December 14. We spent four hours talking about Gregory. I told the minister everything about the saint. He listened very closely. Hermogenes, touching my knee with one hand and looking at Czheglovitoff, kept repeating: "Father Iliodor is a child, a real child. He is telling everything." The minister smiled, while I kept on suggesting to him what ought to be done to Gregory, adding:

"And then, after the exposure and confinement of Gregory, trustworthy people must be sent to Poksrovskoye to burn his house, with all that is in it. They must destroy all the imperial gifts to him, their portraits and letters, so that there is nothing left to show that Gregory has been admitted to the czar's family and won their favor."

"But this cannot be done nowadays, reverend Father," said Czheglovitoff. "How can we lock a man up in a room?"

"A villain like that may be safely locked up, Ivan Gregorievich. I shall attend to it and I shall take all the responsibility on myself."

The minister kept a profound silence.

On December 15, Anthony of Volhynia sent Archimandrite Vitalius to me at the hostelry of the

Jaroslavl Monastery to tell me that the bishops were not amicably disposed toward me for my friendship with Gregory. I replied, "Our friendly relations ceased a long time ago, and one of these days I shall corner him and make him jump like a fish in a frying-pan." Vitalius left. I found out afterward that Anthony was striving to deprive me of Gregory's friendship in order to "humble" me before the Synod, which I had heretofore disobeyed because the Synod was servile to Stolypin, the patriarch-policeman.

The fatal day of the break with Rasputin was approaching. The "great miracle-worker" was on the point of returning from Moscow. I was very excited, the desire to get rid of Rasputin constantly growing in my soul. I wished to atone for the sin of having defended him, to reveal his crafty, sly, bigoted soul, to get even with him for having deceived me about his scandalous conduct. And I cherished a secret wish to embroil myself, on Gregory's account, with the czar and czarina themselves. As early as February 22, 1911, I had said to the priest Vostrikov on the platform of the railroad station at Serdobolsk,

"I should like to give the imperial family a piece of my mind."

"What do you mean?" he inquired. "That will be your undoing!"

"I am willing," said I. "I should like to chide them for having to do with a rascal like Gregory Rasputin. I am eager to see whether they will re-

nounce the scoundrel or not. Why should we pine away for them, die for them, if they—God knows how they carry on with this rake."

Vostrikov remonstrated. I held my tongue, but went on thinking. And now, awaiting Rasputin's arrival, all my being became absorbed in this thought. I could think of nothing but the preparations for his exposure.

I took great pains to have witnesses ready for the fatal hour, intending to expose Gregory in such a way that he would not be able afterward to refute his confessions or to present the matter in an entirely different light. The witnesses I found were Rodionov, Mitia the Blissful, the merchant Chernishov, the priests Ledovsky and Soshestvensky, and the academician Stefan Tverdinsky.

On the evening of December 15 I told W. M. Chvostzoff over the telephone that we were getting ready to bid farewell to Brother Gregory.

"What do you mean?" he said.

"Well, we intend to unmask him and send him back to Siberia to till the soil."

"Look out, act with caution; he's a strong and dangerous man. Look out. You may break your necks."

"We'll try to break his horns instead. We have an excellent plan. If we act according to it, the thing is as good as done, but if we don't, may God help us!"

"Well, God be with you! But be careful. Good-by."

On December 16, in the morning, Gregory called me up on the telephone from the apartment of Mme. Golovina, 6 Zimnia Kanavka, and invited me to come to see him. I went, having previously asked Hermogenes to assemble all the witnesses before eleven o'clock.

Rasputin received me very cordially. I asked him to go with me to Hermogenes.

"Well, how is the master? All right? Not angry with me? Did he receive my telegram?"

"He 's all right. He received the telegram. He is waiting for you. He said to me: 'Go and fetch Gregory Ephimovich, and be quick about it. I want to see him.' "

"You see, Brother, what the czar's regards did with him. And last summer when I left you—oh, how he was attacking me at Saratoff!"

In June, 1911, it seems, Hermogenes had given the saint a severe scolding for his exploits.

"No, it 's all right now," I reassured him.

"Well, come on; come on, darling. That 's what I call fine."

We took a cab and went. On the way Gregory kept on chatting.

"The czar and czarina send regards to you, too; you 'll soon be a bishop. I saw their new palace. It cost five millions. Yes, there are rooms there all

of glass. And the window-panes, the window-panes, oh, how large, how wide they are! Mama is not quite well, and Papa himself showed me around the palace."

When we arrived we went straight to Hermogenes's study. Three of the witnesses, Rodionov, Mitia, and Chernishov, were missing. I rushed to the telephone and urged them to hurry. Twenty minutes later they were all assembled. The saint began to suspect that something was wrong. He shot rapid glances about him with his gray eyes and appeared to be perplexed. Passing through the antechamber with Rodionov, I remarked,

"Ivan Alexandrovich, just look at the saintly rags!"

Rodionov felt Rasputin's fur coat and hat and said:

"Oho! the hat is worth at least three hundred rubles, and the fur coat about two thousand. A real ascetic's raiment."

The historic hour struck. We were all assembled in the red room reserved for special occasions. The saint sat down on a big divan at the round table, then got up, walked a little, and stopped at the door. The witnesses were sitting. Hermogenes was standing. So was I. Mitia, limping and waving his dried-up hand, walked to and fro, casting baleful glances at Gregory. Everybody kept still. At last Gregory understood that something extremely unpleasant for him was about to take place.

"Well, Mitia, begin," said I.

Hermogenes exclaimed:

"Why do you ask the smallest one? You know more than anybody else; you begin!" I was about to open my mouth when something incredible, comical, and at the same time dreadful happened. Mitia screamed out:

"Ah! ah! ah! You are an ungodly man! You have maltreated many women; many nurses; you live with the czarina. You 're a rascal." Then he began to pinch the saint. He pinched him once or twice, let go, and began shouting again. Rasputin was dreadfully frightened; his lips became clotted, and backing toward the door, he bent low, fearing lest Mitia would tear out a piece of his flesh. Mitia took him by the sleeve, dragged him over to an ikon, and pointing with his finger to Gregory's breast, he began to shout still more furiously:

"You 're an ungodly man. You are antichrist."

At last Gregory began to speak; in his turn pointing his finger at Mitia, he muttered in a trembling voice:

"No, you are an ungodly man. You are an ungodly man."

I don't know for how long the saints would have been quarreling and spitting at each other had not Hermogenes intervened. He put on his stole, took the cross in his hand, and said, "Gregory, come hither." Gregory approached the table all a-quiver, pale, stooping, frightened.

"Well, Father Iliodor, begin," Hermogenes commanded.

My mind was in confusion; my heart was beating fast; my entire being was in a state of excitement. I began:

"Brother Gregory, for a whole year you have been trying to force your friendship on me. Being well aware that my work in Tsaritzin is everything to me, you kept me near you by all kinds of threats and ruses. Now the fatal hour has struck for me to get rid of you in order that I may not soil myself with your friendship. I feel that it will not fare well with me, but it will not be worse than being friendly with you. The depths of my being revolt against your vile activity. You have always deceived me. You led me into a grave transgression; before many thousands of Orthodox believers I lied, summoning God the Righteous to be my witness that you were a holy, impassionate man, for I believed you. Today, having mustered all the courage at my command, —for, I must admit, it is not an easy task to struggle with you,—in the presence of these witnesses I come out, no longer as your friend, but as your accuser, your prosecutor. I shall begin to enumerate your deeds. Number one." And I began telling about the saint's exploits.

Hermogenes and all the other witnesses surrounded Rasputin. He stood at the round table, with knees bent, pale and trembling. Biting the finger-nails now of one hand, now of the other, he

glanced about madly with his unpleasant, gray eyes, staring now at one witness, now at another, as if looking for support and protection. The only ones he dared not look at were Hermogenes and Mitia. The last words of my speech were as follows:

"Gregory, I defended you. I shall also destroy you, and all your followers with you."

When I finished my speech Hermogenes, who had been standing quietly in his stole, cross in hand, cried out:

"Confess now, you devil's disciple, in the presence of witnesses, has Father Iliodor spoken the truth about you?"

Rasputin opened his mouth, displayed his teeth, moved his lips, sat down on the divan, immediately jumped up again, and finally muttered in a voice that sounded from beyond the grave:

"Yes, the truth, the truth; everything is true."

Hermogenes continued:

"What enables you to do it?"

"God's power," the saint replied in a more decisive tone.

"O, you ungodly man! why did you torture so that poor, innocent girl, the nun Xenia?"

"I did not torture her; I relieved her."

A subdued laughter was heard among the witnesses, and Hermogenes, having caught the saint's skull with his left hand, began to knock him on the head with the cross, shouting in a terrible voice:

"Devil, in God's name I forbid you to touch

women. I forbid you to enter the imperial palace or to have anything to do with the czarina. You are a murderer. Just as a mother nurses her child in the cradle, so had the holy church with its prayers, blessings, and exploits nursed the great national shrine, the autocracy of the czars. And now you, reptile, destroy our sacred vessels, the bearers of autocratic power. How long will you, accursed man, continue this? Tell us! Fear God, fear this vivifying cross!"

Gregory kept still. His forehead turned unpleasantly purple, like a dead man's. His bloodshot eyes were glancing savagely about from under Hermogenes's large hand; he tried to release himself from Hermogenes's grasp, but could not, agitated as he was. Hermogenes put his right hand on the saint's shoulder and dragged him toward the chapel, crying:

"Come! Come to the chapel! There, before the holy relics, you shall swear not to go where you should not."

Gregory, like a thief caught red-handed, stumbled after Hermogenes, casting sidelong glances with his wild, wandering eyes.

We entered the chapel and paused before the ikon with the relics. Of the witnesses Rodionov alone stopped near the ikon. The rest, awed by the strange sight, did not advance farther than the door. Even the brave Mitia did not venture in, but stand-

ing at the head of the witnesses at the door, stamped his lame foot on the floor, and desperately gesticulated with his sound hand. Then Hermogenes commanded:

"Say, I swear here, before the holy relics, not to cross the threshold of the imperial palace without the sanction of Bishop Hermogenes and Father Iliodor. Swear it! Kiss the ikon! Kiss the holy relics!"

Gregory, standing upright, shaking, pale, almost dead, did as Hermogenes ordered him.

I do not remember what happened afterward. When, weakened by my agitation, I entered my room, I found Rodionov there.

"Perhaps it is true," I said, "that Mitia attacks Gregory thus on account of the saintly portfolio."

On hearing these words Rodionov threw himself on the wide couch and began to roll with laughter, his hands on his stomach. "Well, what are you laughing at, Ivan Alexandrovich? There 's nothing funny about this. You know Gregory has already escaped, and Hermogenes and I are lost."

"Oh! oh! oh! ha! ha! ha! how can one help laughing, dear Father? Portfolios? Lord! Even a dead one would laugh seeing Mitia and Gregory. Portfolios!" Rodionov again threw himself on the couch and roared with laughter. I, too, laughed. How could one help it, picturing to one's self the two saints running to the apartments of Nicholas and Alexandra, trying to overtake one another and to get into

each other's way. Politics! A career! Fame! Grandeur! Rodionov bade me good-by and left. The apartments were empty. Dead silence reigned after the recent infernal noise.

I went to Hermogenes's study. The bishop stood at the table, and I, examining the little ikons and crosses, panagias and other sacred objects, reverently kissed them as if nothing had happened.

"Well, Master, how do you feel?" I said.

"All right, thank God! We got rid of the devil."

"But it is only the beginning of the end, dear Master. Let them rave; we'll go on with our fight."

"To the very end."

"To the end. No compromises."

I fervently kissed Hermogenes's hand, comforted by his fearlessness and fortitude.

In the evening of the same day Mme. Lochtina said to me over the telephone:

"Father Iliodor, for God's sake come at once to the Golovins! Piotr Stefanovich Damansky is here. Sabler will soon come. We 'll talk things over. We shall make up."

"I shall not come," I said. "It 's all over. No advice is necessary. Farewell."

I hung up the receiver. Lochtina called me up several times after that, but I did not answer. I found out afterward that Damansky and Sabler were anxious to learn how the "occurrence" had come about and whether it was possible to straighten it out.

On December 17, in the morning, when I was still in bed, in came Gregory.

"Gregory, what have you come for? It is all over," I said, displeased and embarrassed.

"Darling friend, understand me, pity me. I helped you once upon a time. Do me a favor: help me to get reconciled with Hermogenes."

"That is absolutely impossible, Gregory. Leave me!"

"Everything is possible, darling. Everything is possible. I shall at once ask Mama for 5,000 rubles to get you a printing press. Only make my peace with Hermogenes."

I got up and began to dress. After I got through washing, Gregory suddenly prostrated himself at my feet and began to cry:

"Save me! Papa and Mama are afraid of a scandal, and a scandal is sure to come. Pity Papa and Mama. They love you, they love you so very much!"

"Leave me alone, Gregory! I shall not go to Hermogenes."

"Darling, at least take me to him; I shall speak to him myself. For God's sake, do!"

"But he won't even talk to you."

"Well, go and tell him that I, Gregory, wish to bid him good-by."

A thought flashed through my mind, "Even to a devil one must be not only just, but also lenient." In that moment I pitied Gregory, and I went to see Hermogenes.

"Let him come in," the bishop said; "but I shall not face him. I shall speak to him with my back turned toward him. I shall not let the cur come near me." I conveyed Hermogenes's will to Gregory, who literally ran into the study. Hermogenes stood with his back toward him; with his face almost squeezed into the corner where the ikons hung, he stood chewing a wafer and drinking holy water.

"Master!" exclaimed Gregory; and then, as if stung by something, he rushed out of the apartment, putting on his overcoat and hat as he went.

This was his last encounter with Hermogenes. Gregory, as we discovered later, ran directly to the telegraph office and sent the imperial family a telegram full of incredible slander. He wrote that Hermogenes and I had intended to kill him, to strangle him in our apartments. The following fact corroborated this. In February, 1912, when Hermogenes and I were already in confinement, Czheglovitoff once said a good word about us to the czar. But Nicholas slapped him on the shoulder, saying:

"No, I can't pardon such villains. Were n't they planning to strangle Gregory Ephimovich?" Nikolas Popoff, who came to see me at the Floritcheva Hermitage told me this, quoting Rodionov, who was a friend of Czheglovitoff.

CHAPTER II

THE TRIUMPH OF RASPUTIN

HAVING returned to Tsaritzin, I spent my holidays with a heavy presentiment of impending disaster. Rasputin, at Tsarskoe Selo with Viroubova, was mobilizing all his forces, the czar, the czarina, Viroubova, Mackaroff, Kokovzeff, Sabler, and Damansky, having previously appointed the latter assistant high procurator of the Holy Synod. To conceal his presence in the capital Gregory ordered his friends to announce in the papers that he had gone home. Of course the newspaper men willingly did his bidding. In order to reassure Nicholas and Alexandra that the scandal had not penetrated beyond the court circles and that the "impudent sally" of Hermogenes and myself against him had no significance whatever, Rasputin summoned Bishop Barnaby, already known to the reader. Barnaby reassured the czar and czarina, saying to them: "Don't worry. We shall protect God's great servant, Gregory." Then the imperial family, urged on by Rasputin, decided to punish most severely the "villains" who had attempted the life of the godly ascetic. The punishment began during the Christmas holidays, when Bishop Nickon alone was at the Holy Synod.

On January 8, 1912, in the evening, while riding through the streets of Tsaritzin, I received the following message from Hermogenes in Petrograd:

My dear and precious friend Iliodor:

Our enemies destroy all our plans. I have been removed from the Synod. The permission for your printing-shop, paper, and magazine has been revoked. The main work is being done by the two "hermits," Sabler and Damansky, and the nasty, half-slaughtered owl that you saw in your dream. Come here at once. We shall fight the common enemy. Help me. Affectionately yours,

HERMOGENES.

The next day I assembled the people and offered a Te Deum for travelers. The people, feeling a presentiment of something evil, wept bitterly and even tried to prevent me from going.

I reached Petrograd on the morning of January 12. Hardly had I greeted Hermogenes before he began to say:

"Well, I have been dismissed from the Synod. On January 3, Sabler came to me and said: 'Master, the Synod has transferred you to the diocese. You have many affairs to attend to there.' 'What Synod?' I asked. 'There is only one member of the Synod in Petrograd just now, Bishop Nickon.' And he said: 'Well, the emperor has already approved my report. All that 's left for you to do now is to go in peace. Go; but give me your blessing, Master.' I shouted: 'I 'm no master of yours. Your master is Grishka Rasputin. Leave me. I rushed at him. He hardly had time to seize his fur coat and hat."

"You have made a good beginning, your Grace," I said. "We must continue in the same spirit."

Just then Mitia the Blissful and the writer Rodionov came in. Mitia, having greeted me, said:

"The czarina wants to unfrock you at once and give you a jail-bird's passport, but the czar wishes to avoid a scandal."

"How do you know all that?"

"Orlov and Putiatin have told me about it."

"Well, let him just try to unfrock me! And on account of whom? On account of the devil Rasputin? I 'll rise against the czar."

"What 's the matter with you, Father? Does one dare to revolt against the czar?" Rodionov, terribly agitated, tried to calm me.

"I will, I will; I 'll rise against everybody. I 'll perish, but rise I will. I shall not reconcile myself to falsehood. They are the imperial family, and just see how they carry on! I have suffered long enough."

Everybody was silent and looked at me, while I, greatly excited, strode back and forth, cursing the imperial family, the Synod, and the ministers.

The same day I received the newspaper men and issued a protest through the press. On January 14, Hermogenes, Rodionov, and I called on Goremykin.

"Ivan Logginovich," I begged, "you yourself told us that you dismissed the first Duma. The czar kissed you for that, called you his father, and asked you to bless him and the heir. Ivan Logginovich, you have already received all kinds of distinctions.

If you were to adorn yourself with all your orders and medals, there would be no room on your chest. You would have to hang them either on your trousers or your back. You have nothing to gain and nothing to lose. For God's sake! go to the czar and ask him to grant Bishop Hermogenes an audience and give him a chance to explain."

"No, no; I cannot," answered Goremykin. "The court etiquette does not permit it, Father Iliodor." That very day Hermogenes went to consult the Grand Duchess Militza Nicolaïevna. Militza, according to Hermogenes, denounced Rasputin in very strong terms, but refused to come out against him, giving as a reason that the saint had both the czar and especially the czarina fast in his clutches.

On January 15, Goremykin came to the hostelry of the Jaroslavl Monastery, but could not help us in any way. Twice the czar wrote to the Synod, "I hope the Holy Synod will persuade Bishop Hermogenes to leave Petrograd for Saratoff." Three Synod members, Nazarius, Seraphim, and Nickon, hoping to be rewarded for executing the czar's command, bent before his will, came to the hostelry, and begged Hermogenes to submit to the czar's orders. Hermogenes insisted, "I shall obey the czar, but not Grishka Rasputin!" He was ill in bed at the time. Nothing could be done to persuade him. Nickon especially tried his best. I could refrain no longer and peeped into Hermogenes's bedroom. He was half reclining on the cushions, while Nickon, who

was cross-eyed, sat on a chair near the night-table and squinted sidewise. With one eye trying to see something under Hermogenes's bed, and with the other looking up at the thick layer of cobwebs on the ceiling, he drawled out in a sepulchral voice:

"Master, my brother in Christ, obe-e-e-y the czar's will."

"I don't obey Rasputin," was Hermogenes's curt answer.

"Well, but Rasputin acts through the czar. Have pity on the czar, on God's church. We must not speak openly of this imperial plague, Rasputin. We all know this devil's son; but we must not tell the people lest they rise against the czar and God's church."

"Let the Synod explain the situation to the czar; the people need not know," replied Hermogenes.

"But the czar won't listen to anybody. He only commands us to banish you from Petrograd, that 's all. Kind brother Hermogenes, please obey the czar."

As he was leaving the antechamber he threw me a glance with his wild, squinting eyes and hissed, "You 'll get your deserts, too."

On the evening of January 18, at Hermogenes's request, I wrote the following telegram to the czar, Hermogenes sitting near me and weeping very bitterly all the while:

Father Czar:
I have devoted my entire life to serving the church and

the throne. I have served faithfully, sparing no efforts. The noon of my life is past; my head is white. And now in my old age you, Emperor, are banishing me from the capital. I am ready to go wherever you send me, but first grant me an audience, so that I may reveal to you a certain secret that weighs on my mind.

BISHOP HERMOGENES.

To this appeal the following answer came through the Synod, "I do not care to know anything about any secret. NICHOLAS." After that the bishop compelled me to compose a telegram to Alexandra. I wrote: "Mother Czarina: My way to the emperor is obstructed. Help me, open the way for me. BISHOP HERMOGENES." Alexandra answered: I am sorry, but I can do nothing in the matter. One must obey the powers appointed by God. ALEXANDRA." Hermogenes spat on this telegram and muttered:

"What hypocrisy! These are Grishka's answers. He sits at the palace and dictates them." And indeed, as Mitia the Blissful discovered, Rasputin was then at court advising the czar and czarina what to do and how to act.

At 11 P. M. on January 17 two packets were brought from the Synod, a large one for Hermogenes, a small one for me. Hermogenes opened his. It said that for disobeying the Synod and the emperor he was sent into exile, by imperial order, at the Jirovitsky Monastery. I opened mine, and found that I was banished by imperial order to the Florit-

shev Hermitage, in the government of Vladimir, located far away from any human habitation, amid impassable forests. Not a word was said in the decree about the cause of my exile.

Having read my banishment decree, I bent my head low, and without taking leave of anybody, went to my room. I immediately decided to see the matter through. At midnight M. O. Paosersky of the staff of the "Vechernee Vremia" called me up and asked me what I intended to do.

"I shall walk to the Sergius Monastery," I said, "and from there to the Floritshev Hermitage. The decree does not specify how I am to get there. I 'll go on foot."

The next morning the papers stated that I had set out on foot for Moscow. My plan was to escape to Tsaritzin, assemble the people in my monastery, and start a rebellion against absolutism. As a matter of fact, as I was just leaving my lodging, warmly dressed, and having attached a bag with my Bible to my shoulder, Hermogenes's lay brother Fedia suddenly appeared, saying:

"Father, where are you going? They 'll arrest you near Petrograd. Return. Consult the master."

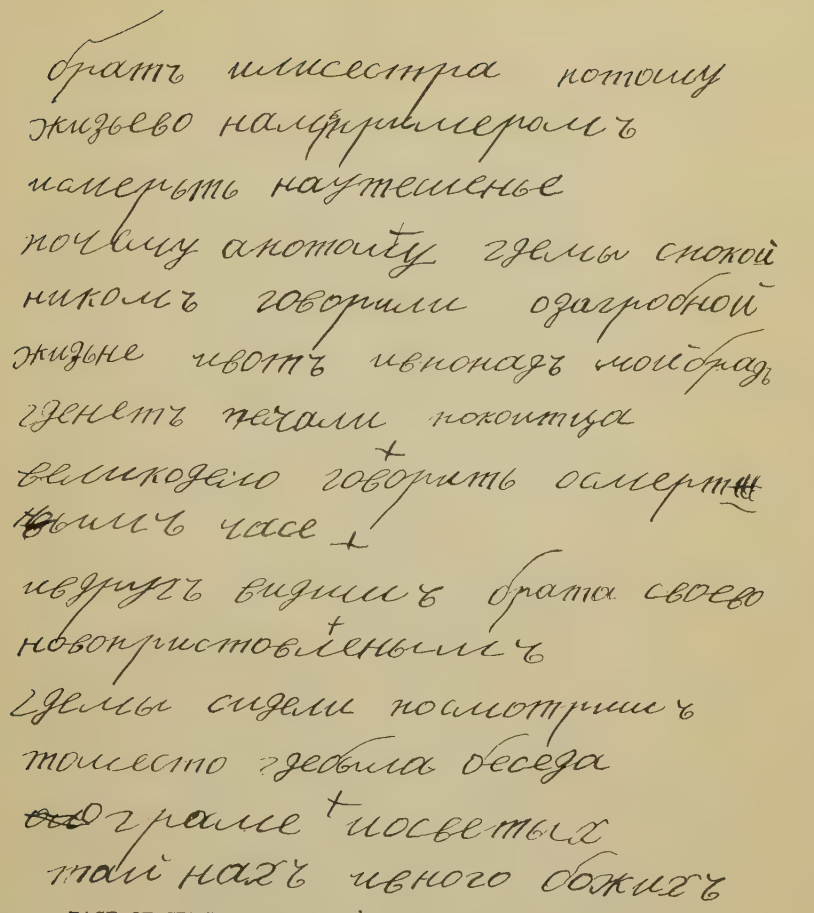
His words brought me to my senses, and I remained at the Jaroslavl hostelry, hidden in the remote apartments until night came, when Rodionov and Mitia, disguising me in somebody's old overcoat, put me in a coach and took me to the residence of Piotr Badmaef, the doctor of Tibetan medicine. There

I stayed for seven days. I read in the papers how the police and the newspaper men were searching for me. It was still my intention to go to Tsaritzin. However, I learned that my monastery was closed and that nobody was allowed to enter it and that patrols were watching for me on all the roads leading thither. Then I surrendered to the authorities and, accompanied by ten gendarmes, was despatched to the place of my exile. As I was starting, this note was handed to me: "My beloved child: God be with you on your way to the Floritshev Hermitage! May the Heavenly Queen keep watch over you. Affectionately yours, HERMOGENES." That same day he left for the Jirovitsky Monastery.

The journey to the Floritshev Hermitage took a day and a half. Arriving, surrounded with guards, I was placed in a small, damp room, with crumbling floors and with solid iron bars at the narrow windows. There was a small stove in one corner. The prior of the monastery was exceedingly surprised to receive orders that I should be treated in this way, having prepared for me, a learned monk, decent quarters of four rooms. It was not till 1913, when I read Lochtina's diaries, that everything became clear to me. I discovered there the following letter from Rasputin, written probably from Petrograd:

Darling Papa and Mama:

God hurled the rebel down from heaven. And Iliodor must be sent to jail. Let him realize there what it means to rise against the anointed sovereign. Men like him used to be



PAGE OF GREGORY RASPUTIN'S DIARY IN HIS OWN HANDWRITING
Original in possession of Father Iliodor

Translation:—"The lives of our brothers and sisters serve us as examples and their death as consolation, because we have spoken with them of the hereafter and they lie where there is no sorrow. It is a great thing to speak of the house of death. You see your brothers dead. You think of the place where you took food with them, and where you talked of the Church and the Holy Mysteries"

killed once. Let there be no leniency for him. Give the bishop orders to this effect.

GREGORY.

I found myself in a place of exile, blessed by the saint, and Hermogenes likewise. Rasputin, in order to hide his traces, retired to the village of Poksrovskoye, having previously spent two hours at a reception at W. M. Kokovzev's, whom he made premier in September. "You see," he announced to the newspaper men just before his departure from Petrograd, "I spit on everybody."

The czar and czarina were evidently embarrassed by the uproar our affair caused throughout Russia, for they sent to Poksrovskoye and asked the saint's advice. This is literally what is recorded in Lochtina's diaries under the date of March 6, 1912:

Father Gregory said to-day that he would like to rip open Father Iliodor's belly.

And to the czar and czarina he wrote:

Papa and my darling Mama:

Never mind the noise, it will disappear like flowing water. You need feel no embarrassment. It is always so, they will get tired of it. The czar and czarina are above all. And you must be so. God sends consolation, and the devil distress. And God is mightier than the devil. Sabler and Damansky will attend to everything. Yes.

GREGORY.

I began to struggle. I refused to leave my cell. I saw reporters. Rasputin wrote to the czar and czarina:

Darling Papa and Mama:

We must subdue the rebel Iliodor. Otherwise the dog will devour everybody. He 's a malicious dog; he does n't care. It is necessary to break his teeth. Treat him more strictly. More guards. Yes.

GREGORY.

The task of subduing me fell on the drunken archbishop of Vladimir, Nicholas, who recently died of alcoholic apoplectic stroke at the Petrograd monastery. Nobody was allowed to see me. No letters were transmitted. Armed soldiers surrounded my cell. Shutters were attached to my windows, and as soon as the sun set locks were hung on the shutters. My life in the dungeon was becoming more and more unbearable. I decided, if possible, to escape. I succeeded in communicating with some friends in Tsaritzin, whom I asked to send a contingent of faithful men immediately. All day they traveled. But when they arrived the police would not let them approach me except in the presence of the authorities.

In my room I had some cranberries, the acid flavor of which I enjoyed very much. These berries gave me an idea. I extracted some of the juice, which somewhat resembled blood, and placed it where it would be observed. Then I lay down on my bed and called for some of the authorities of the Hermitage, saying: "I am dying. Let me see a couple of my friends." They had already been much upset over the state of my health, so they gave permission for ten men to communicate with me for a few minutes. I

instructed these men to tell the others that I was going to make a desperate attempt to escape, and for them to provide the subterranean chambers at Tsaritzin with water and provisions and to make ready for a siege.

Two men were to help my escape through the window and on board a steamer, which was specially chartered to carry me down the Volga to Tsaritzin. Everything was made ready there in the subterranean passages, and three thousand men took oath to defend the monastery and to leave all to die, if necessary, for their father.

On the night when the escape was planned one of the men came to me through the chimney, the other taking charge of a carriage outside that was to convey me to the pier where the steamer was docked. The man who joined me was to remain in the room after my departure in order to impersonate me if any one came.

It is customary when a prisoner is held in a monastery for a servant always to knock at the door and ask what the prisoner wants, and to leave the objects outside the door, the prisoner taking them in himself. At twelve o'clock, the hour appointed for the escape, everything was in readiness. A rope was attached to me, to draw me out by way of the chimney. But the man who was waiting for me outside proved to be a traitor. His name was Sinitzin. I mention him because the reader will meet him later. When the time came to make my escape the moon was shining so

brightly that every tree of the adjoining forest was clearly visible, and, to my horror, I saw human forms among the trees. In that moment of consternation I realized that I was betrayed, and I said to my companion: "Look! There are policemen in the forest. Our cause is lost."

From twelve until one o'clock we discussed what should be our next move. At one o'clock some one knocked at my door. I had heard a noise and deep voices which I recognized as those of the inmates of the monastery, and by the clanking of the sabers and spurs I knew only too well that the police were with them. I opened the door slightly, and saw in the corridor all the members of the monastery, accompanied by the police. I could hear the clergy murmuring: "My God! my God! he has escaped! We are lost!" My companion crawled under the bed, and I kept silent, awaiting what would come next. The police outside the building got a ladder, and I could see in the dark the lighting of a match and his silhouette. I approached the window while the match was still burning and said, "I am here." The officer shouted with a powerful voice: "He is here! He is here!" A few seconds later I could hear prayers in the corridors. The people of the monastery were thanking God for having averted a great calamity.

When the murmur of the prayers died away, I threw open the door of my cell and invited the crowd outside to enter. The commander came in and said, "There is a man in your cell. What is his name?"

I answered, "Stephen Alad." (He has been decorated for bravery in the present war.) But Alad was not to be seen. During my imprisonment my followers had sent me dried *vobla* fish in such great quantities that I was able to screen him from sight by means of them. The officers looked into the chimney, examined the rope, peered under the bed, and, seeing nothing but dried fish, thought my companion must have escaped. As the police were holding a conference in my cell in regard to the refugee I was about to say a prayer to God for his safety when, to my horror, I heard a deep snore from under the bed. The poor devil had fallen asleep from overstrain and was snoring like a locomotive. Of course the next moment he was dragged out from under the fish, still asleep. In this way my attempt to escape came to nothing.

Meanwhile a great scandal had broken out in Petrograd owing to a letter containing a full account of Rasputin's exploits which I had written to the czar and handed to Badmaef. It turned out that he had transmitted the letter not to the emperor, but to the president of the Duma, Rodzianko, and the deputies Gouchkov and Kamensky, who had subsequently called upon Badmaef and discussed it with him. Later, on the basis of this letter, Gouchkov and Purishkevich delivered thundering speeches in denunciation of the Synod and Sabler. Copies of the letter, moreover, were circulated all over Petrograd, in the salons and among the members of the state

council and the Duma. In this way the secret which Nicholas had not wanted to hear, and which the Synod had carefully concealed, began to be divulged.

The letter reached Alexandra and infuriated her. A. E. Pistolkors wrote me at the hermitage: "A letter is being circulated in Petrograd; it has reached Mama. The letter is horrible. It is ascribed to you. Answer." Of course I did not reply. But I wrote to Anna Viroubova: "Sister in Christ: How long will you side with Rasputin? Forget him. If you do not leave him, a great all-Russian scandal will break out. Woe to you then! Listen to my advice. Fear God. Repent. ILIODOR."

Pistolkors replied in Viroubova's name: "Father Iliodor: What kind of scandal do you threaten in your letter to Annushka? Who is going to arrange the scandal? You? It is possible. The French Revolution was started when the queen was accused of stealing some diamonds."

I answered very cautiously: "I am not going to slander anybody. I champion truth. You had better leave the miserable saint. And don't bother me with your letters. ILIODOR."

During this correspondence Rodionov sent two messengers to me at the hermitage to get certain letters of the czarina and her daughters to Rasputin, which the saint had given me as souvenirs during my visit to him at Poksrovskoye. They were full of endearing expressions. These letters had been brought to me from Tsaritzin by my brother Alexander, to

whom I had wired for them. For his visit to me he was immediately deprived, without trial, of his position as psalm-reader and forced to join the army as a private. I sent the originals of these letters to Rodionov, keeping copies for myself. A few days later Rodionov replied, saying that he had transmitted my letters to the czar. I was exceedingly displeased by this, for my object in letting Rodionov have the letters was not to give them to the czar, but to have him start an earnest campaign against the saint. Instead of this he had played into the hands of the "blissful one." It happened thus. Nicholas, having received the letters, showed them to Alexandra. Alexandra wired to Poksrovskoye, asking the saint how her letters and those of her children had happened to come into my possession. And Rasputin, true to his nature as ever, answered:

Darling Mama:

Iliodor is a cur. He 's a thief. He steals letters. What nastiness! He stole them from my trunk or got them from somewhere else. Yes. There 's a fine priest for you! He serves the devil. Know this: he has sharp teeth, the thief. Yes.

GREGORY.[1]

The letters and the saint's false accusation did their work. Alexandra and Nicholas now had deadly proofs of my guilt.

On May 8, 1912, I petitioned the Synod to unfrock me. In my petition I wrote as follows:

1 Lochtina's diaries.

Either indict Rasputin for his horrible crimes committed on religious grounds or unfrock me. I cannot reconcile myself to the fact that the Synod, the bearer of the Holy Ghost's blessing, should shield the holy devil who is desecrating Christ's church. Know that I am willing to rot in the dungeon, but that I shall not reconcile myself to the desecration of God's name.

ILIODOR, priest.

As a result of this petition, Hermogenes sent me the following telegram: "Dear Father Iliodor: Suffer a little longer. Take your petition back. The last wave is rising and succor is near." To this entreaty I wired Hermogenes just this one word, "Farewell!" That was the end of our friendship. Since then I no longer know, or care to know, Hermogenes, although I never say anything evil about him.

As for my petition to unfrock me, the Synod decided to "admonish me for six months, as demanded by the law." Of course I refused to receive the admonishers. I drove them back from the threshold of my cell, saying, "Go and tell the Synod not to worship the holy devil." And to the Synod I wrote as follows:

Please cease mocking me. Why do you send your admonishers to disturb me? It is not I who ought to be admonished, but you, worshipers of the devil Grishka Rasputin. I shall not take back my petition unless you and the lay courts indict Grishka for his exploits. I request you not to send me any more admonishers, but rather to do penance for your own terrible misdeeds.

ILIODOR, priest.

ILIODOR, IN CIVILIAN DRESS, JUST AFTER HIS UNFROCKING, 1913
He wears the cross at his throat in order to refute the accusation of the Holy Synod that he had renounced Christianity

Meanwhile my devotees at Tsaritzin continued praying and hoping that the czar and czarina would come to their senses and open the road for me to return from Floritschev. They were extremely restless. But Nicholas and Alexandra, instructed by the saint, only grew more and more furious. Rasputin wrote to them from Poksrovskoye:

Darling Papa and Mama:
Iliodor has taught them to rebel. Don't mind his women. Only the devils listen to their prayers. Order a good flogging for those women. It will make them forget about the rebel, and they will be humbled.

GREGORY.[1]

It was just after this letter that the greatest, most incredible crime was committed at Tsaritzin.

On September 23 my devotees gathered at the monastery church and sang a Te Deum to the Holy Virgin. Suddenly Archpriest Strokov and Police Captain Basil Bronitzky arrived and, following explicit instructions from Petrograd from the Holy Synod and the ministers, ordered the police to drive the people out of the church. Twenty-six policemen, headed by the captain, unsheathed their sabers, and with oaths attacked the worshipers. They dragged the women and girls from one corner of the church to the other, tore out their hair, knocked out their teeth, tore their dresses, struck them in the face, and did other shameful and incredible things. At the end of two hours the floor of the church resembled

1 Lochtina's diaries.

a battle-field. Everywhere there was seen blood and torn garments, and women and girls lay about half unconscious. The police arrested many of these. They were imprisoned to this very year.

Having received full information about this horrible crime, I wrote sharp letters of protest to Sabler, Damansky, the governor of Saratoff and the Tsaritzin chief of police cursing in the name of God all those who, being Orthodox Christians, had dared to countenance a butchery of God's children at His altar. To Sabler I wrote as follows:

You worship the devil Grishka Rasputin, traitor and apostate. Your dirty hands must not steer the holy rudder of Christ's bride, God's church; it is for you to polish the devil's boots in hell. I say this because of my duty as a priest.

ILIODOR.

And here are a few excerpts from what I wrote to the Holy Synod:

Holy Fathers:

Why do you not get rid of me altogether? If it is out of Christian love, let me tell you frankly I do not need your love; it is too much like the love of a wolf for a sheep. You would have got rid of me long ago were you not afraid lest your own sins would be revealed. That is why you spare me. You dare not bring my affair to an end. But I shall help you.

Who are you? You are career-seekers. You have forgotten God's glory and sought only mortal fame. You are servile and humble before the authorities in order to secure your earthly well-being. You despise the poor, you kiss the rich. All your life is a continual festival. You wear luxu-

rious silk cassocks, you ride in rich coaches, you sleep in soft beds, you drink the best wine. You are proud, haughty, and rancorous. You excuse yourselves by saying that you intend to bequeath your wealth to useful institutions, but Christianity recognizes no such philanthropy. It appreciates philanthropy in which conscience, self-abnegation, and disinterestedness rule. . . . You blind the people with your magnificence, but you do not let them live. Who drives you on? Who leads you? At present it is Sabler. And what kind of man is he? A grafter who takes bribes of archpriests, priors, and mother-superiors of monasteries. Anthony of Volhynia, on one of his visits to Petrograd, spoke about Sabler's bribery as follows. "Oh, he 's such an expert at it that he is likely to steal the purse out of the devil's pocket." Those words were uttered in my presence. . . .

And how about your conscience? Anthony of Volhynia is the incarnation of your conscience. He is your chorus leader, so to say. Many think him a mysterious, dark force; but I know him well. He is a libertine. I have heard him use the profanest, filthiest expressions in the language. He receives yearly from the Pochaiev Monastery thirty thousand rubles of the people's blood. What does he do with the people's hard-earned money? He strives to win the reputation especially among the students, of a philanthropic, unmercenary person. He distributes his money without any regard to consequences. I know students who, having received money from him, have spent seventy rubles in one night with women. And Anthony, being aware of this, continues to give money to these good-for-nothings because they praise his non-existent virtues.

What is your activity during Synod sessions? What do you do? Your principal occupation is divorce cases. Anthony of Volhynia has remarked again and again, "If the Synod loses its divorce cases, they will have nothing to

do, for the divorce cases make up three quarters of their work." And what are these cases? Filthy, nasty, repulsive. It might become a policeman to deal with them, but not you, saintly prelates. Does it become you, old men, to read and hear the most indecent testimony? After your luxurious luncheons and dinners you delight in these filthy affairs. And can you possibly understand while in that mood that somewhere, far away in Tsaritzin, there are followers of Iliodor who pray to God, crave for a spiritual life, yearn for communion with God, desire to live in peace and love with men? For eight years you have been making game of me; you have driven me from city to city for my zealous devotion, you have tortured me both physically and mentally. I have to this day considered the Synod equivalent to an infallible assembly, acting in accordance with the Holy Spirit. Was I the only one who thought so? Did not the entire Russian Orthodox Church regard the Synod as the organ of the Holy Spirit dwelling in the church and ruling her? The entire Russian Church, in the person of its best sons and daughters, has applied to you, asking: "What has Iliodor been imprisoned for? Why has he been exiled from Tsaritzin?" And you have not answered yet. What can you answer? If you, unexpectedly, were to tell the truth, half of the church would forsake you. It is fear that seals your lips. Hence I shall have to speak for you.

You, traitors to Christ, imprisoned me, following the orders of certain powerful people, because I exposed the scoundrel Rasputin. How have you treated me and my beloved spiritual children? I hope that you yourselves will not deny that all that has been done to us by the clerical and lay authorities from January 18, 1912, to this day has been done with your sanction. When on January 18 you decided to exile me to the Floritschev Hermitage, I was, with your permission, arrested by gendarmes, contrary to the promise of the minister of the interior. In Moscow, again

with your sanction, I was surrounded at the station by about thirty policemen. I was brought to the Floritschev Hermitage, and if I now tell you what the life at that monastery is like it is to remind you, sitting in your palaces, that you know nothing of what goes on among the masses. You do not care to know. The Floritschev Hermitage is not a monastery, but a bawdy-house. Almost every monk has a woman or two. Having or not having a woman depends not on the requirements of asceticism, but on the number of years one has spent in the monastery. Whoever has lived in the monastery a long time may live with a woman openly; newcomers must exercise care. Two or three times during the year a great number of women pilgrims flock to the monastery. The majority of them come not to pray.

And you, prelates, having exiled me to Floritschev, put me under the surveillance of Archbishop Nicholas, a sick, irresponsible drunkard. You did this to make sport of me. Naturally, drunken and rude as he is, full of unreasoning obedience to you and of ill will toward me, he began to torture me and my dear spiritual children, forgetting all the affairs of his diocese. At the hermitage, with your sanction and under the fatherly guidance of the drunken archbishop, I have been subjected to all kinds of mockery and even physical violence. You approved of this, just as you approved of the butchery of my innocent spiritual children at Tsaritzin. Are people allowed to pray only for your bellies, and not for their own needs? Why have you appropriated the rights of God? Why have you converted the churches, the places of communion with God, into police stations, business offices and hostelries?

You are haughty men, madmen; you are ungodly men. By means of curses and threats of hell and eternal flames you compel the poor, timid people to worship you and to feed your insatiable stomachs. You are enemies of the true God. I do not know you, and from this time on I do not

care to know you. I despise you with every fiber of my soul. With you, admirers of the "holy devil," the filthy rascal Grishka Rasputin, I do not wish to be in spiritual communion. Therefore unfrock me as soon as possible and excommunicate me from your church. You must do it. The law requires it. Beasts, thriving on the people's blood, how long will you burden the people under the sacrilegious guise of God's name?

ILIODOR.

On November 8, the day the legal term for admonishing me expired, I was not yet unfrocked. Rasputin's adherents were afraid to do it. The czar and czarina and the saint opposed it. Theophanes informed me through A. A. Zhukoff that had I gone to church twice I would have been released from the hermitage. But Metropolitan Vladimir said to Zhukoff: "How can we pardon him? He will not humble himself. He has refused to go to church even once." Indeed, the humility the saint and his sovereign and holy assistants wished to see was far, very far from my soul. I suppose it was possessed by the pride of the devils expelled from other people by blissful Gregory: they had entered my soul and possessed it entirely.

On November 19-20 I sent my abdication to the Holy Synod. Having written it, I cut my arm with a razor and signed it with my blood. This is what I said:

For ten months I have appealed to you to do penance. I have implored you, begged you, to defend Christ's bride,

the Russian Church, from the violence and desecrations of the libertine Grishka Rasputin. You have not repented; you have not even expressed a desire to do so. All I can say to you now is, "May your abode be empty!" May eternal truth judge you! Now I renounce your faith. I renounce your church. I renounce you as prelates. Under your mantles you have concealed the "holy devil" Gregory Ephimovich Rasputin, knowing that this vessel of lawlessness, pretending to consecrate human bodies, has ruined many. You have known this, but you have shielded him while intriguing to damnation the champions of the purity and innocence of Christ's bride, the exposers of the "holy devil." While the body of the church trembled like a wounded bird, like a dove in a hawk's claws, like an innocent maiden before an insolent violator, you solemnly, at the Synod, extolled the hunter, the hawk, the violator, and called him confessor. And you sent your servants to the Imperial Duma to proclaim before all Russia, before the whole world, that no holy devil was concealed under your cloaks. But he was concealed, and he is still being shielded by you. He enjoys his freedom, he comes to Petrograd, and even puts up at the Synod house on Liteinaja Street. You may perhaps be permitted thus to make sport of others, but not of me, not of me. I shall not allow you to mock my ideals. And therefore, from now on, I recognize neither your God nor you as his prelates.

My renunciation came as a surprise both to the Synod and the saint. It took them unawares. Rasputin was the first one to regain his senses. This is what he wrote from Poksrovskoye to the imperial family:

Darling Papa and Mama:
Iliodor is a horrible devil. A renegade. An accursed

one. He must be declared insane. Doctors must be called, or he will prove a calamity. He dances to the devil's pipes.

GREGORY.[1]

It was of no avail. Although I did not know then about the saint's letter, prompted by rumors that came from Petrograd, I wrote as follows to the minister of justice:

Your Excellency:

Metropolitan Vladimir, together with my "friends" in Petrograd, are planning to declare me insane. What devilry! I cannot allow that history, which will impartially analyze my affair, should say that I have not been responsible for my present actions. Therefore I ask you to send physicians to me immediately and have me examined in the most careful manner. I am perfectly sane. I want the physicians to corroborate this and put it on record. I shall await the doctors from day to day. I believe and hope that I shall not be disappointed in my lawful, sacred expectations, for you guard human rights, the rights of Russian citizens. May your name be blessed; may it not in the future be mentioned with that of Herod's, the assassin of John, so that coming generations of Russian people will curse it and mention it only with disgust! With sincere belief in you,

ILIODOR, the priest.

Of course no physicians were sent to me.

On December 13-17, 1912, the Synod unfrocked me, not as a result of my request, but by its own decision, because I "doubted the succoring resurrection of the Lord God, our Saviour Jesus Christ."

On December 22, the following came to my humble

[1] Lochtina's diaries.

prison cell: Makarius, prior of the monastery; the treasurer Melchisedek; Provost Archpriest Dmitrievsky; the colonel of gendarmes, the police captain, a police inspector; and several guards, monks, and lay brothers, twenty men in all. They asked me to attest my unfrocking on synodical paper, and I, who for nine years had signed my name as Iliodor, wrote Sergius Trufanoff. I was quite composed. I said to myself: "Now at this instant God's blessing, healing the sick and succoring the needy, has forsaken me. The blessing brought upon me once at the seminary by archbishop Sergius has been taken from me by gendarmes and guards; it rests now on a worthier man, on the saint Gregory. But beware, you impious devils! A greater blessing has been added to your exposers."

The authorities left, and I, already a layman, went to my birthplace, my parents' home, the hamlet Bolschoye in the district of the Don.

While I was on my way, or perhaps earlier, the saint wrote to the imperial family the following letter, recorded in Lochtina's diaries:

Papa mine and darling Mama:

Well, the devil Sergius Trufanoff, the renegade, is gone. Anathema. He 's at large now. He must be followed lest he incite sedition. Get the police after him. Let them break his teeth. The impious one. Yes.

GREGORY.

CHAPTER III

I ESCAPE FROM RUSSIA

I WENT home to my parents, hoping in their love to find consolation and rest from the storms and sorrows of my life. I had, of course, no money, and I could expect no assistance from my relatives, who were all poor. I could not enter government service, because I had been deprived of my civil rights for twenty years, and I could get no employment of a private kind because I was constantly surrounded by secret police agents. In fact, during the whole year and a half that I spent at my birthplace strict watch was kept over me, the detective work being performed by seventeen guards and two local priests, Ivliev and Stefanoff, the latter of whom had taught me twenty-seven years before at the primary school that God had created the world in the way that children blow soap-bubbles. These guards followed me, and recorded in diaries every word I uttered and every step I took.

At the same time Mme. Lochtina, who had settled in my neighborhood, tried by every means in her power to reconcile me with Gregory and to make me resume my former life. She wrote to the imperial family about it, and they, through Viroubova, asked Rasputin's advice. He replied: "Sergius Trufan-

off, the renegade, must be punished. Impale him. Anathema." Again he wrote: "Sergius Trufanoff, the renegade, must be hanged so that his tongue sticks out at the side like a dog's." Lochtina, however, did not give up hope. Once she telegraphed to the czar, on board the yacht *Standard,* as follows, "When will you learn to love Father Iliodor? Iliodor's Olga." The czar and czarina sent this telegram to the saint for decision. He wrote on the other side of the telegram the following words, "If one is to pardon dogs like Sergius Trufanoff, he, the cur, will devour everybody." This telegram is now in my possession.

Meanwhile my followers kept coming to me, saying that they did not so much wish to talk with me about religion as to ask my help in ridding Russia of the czar and Rasputin. I told them that to accomplish this I would have to shed blood, and that bloodshed was against the principles of the new faith that had come to me since I had renounced Orthodoxy. But they were not to be put off, and finally came to me with four hundred thousand rubles, saying that they had sold their land, their flocks and herds, everything, to get the money, and begging me to use it in some way that would establish justice and the will of the people.

I did not know what to do. On the one hand, I thought to end my life on the plains as a shepherd, having already borrowed sufficient money to buy a flock of fifty sheep; on the other, a great storm was ravaging my soul. I thought of the injustice that

was triumphing over truth; I saw plainly the deplorable condition of the Russian peasant. The people were coming to me in ever greater and greater numbers, begging me to tell them what was necessary to bring about a change.

Under the influence of the past and the pressure of the people, I decided to start a revolutionary movement. As I was always surrounded by ten secret police agents to whom I had to report every morning and evening, I decided to flee through the same forests on the Volga through which the great revolutionists Stenka Razin and Pugatcheff had escaped. I made my way out during the night. When the police came to see me in the morning, I was not there. My friends told them that I was ill, so they said: "We shall come in the evening. He must come out of the house then so that we can see his face." In the evening they came, and one of my followers appeared before them in disguise, wrapped up like a sick man. The police, thinking it was I, went away.

In the meantime I made the forest my headquarters. Now, my guide was the same Sinitzin who had betrayed me in my attempt to escape from the hermitage, for I did not yet know that he was a traitor. I supplied Sinitzin with funds to purchase 120 bombs, which he brought to me in the forest. It was my intention to start a revolution on October 6, 1913. I planned the assassination on that day of sixty lieutenant-governors and forty bishops throughout Russia, those who had used their greatest in-

fluence over the czar in his reactionary policy.

October 6 is the czar's name-day and was formerly celebrated throughout the land, all the governors appearing in the churches. My plan was to have them assassinated as they came out. I chose one hundred men to execute this plan. Twenty of them were despatched to Petrograd. There, in the famous Cathedral of St. Isaac, all the highest members of the aristocracy and the Holy Synod were wont to assemble for prayer on the czar's name-day, an inclosure being chained off for them. These twenty men were to disguise themselves as priests, emerge from the altar, surround the circle, and throw the bombs. I thought that the result of this act of terrorism would be a general upheaval, and that afterward a revolution would break out, previous events having shown that acts of terrorism had always stirred the Russian people. If I had succeeded, I am convinced that a revolution would have started.

The police had offered a very large reward for any one who would produce me, dead or alive. My hiding-place was known only to two persons, Sinitzin and my wife, for I had been married shortly before. I had full confidence only in my wife, and I therefore advised her to stay in Tsaritzin and watch Sinitzin. She learned there that Sinitzin, having read the police advertisement offering a reward, went to headquarters and asked for ten thousand rubles, promising that he would show them my hiding-place.

My wife immediately set out to warn me. She

reached me before the police. We threw the bombs into the Volga. Scarcely had we time to do this and my wife to escape into the forest, when the police came and asked:

"Where are the bombs?"

I answered:

"I have no bombs. Why do you listen to an old idiot?"

But there was against me a terribly convincing piece of evidence. When Sinitzin brought the bombs, I, wishing to ascertain whether they were genuine or not, had thrown one against a tree. The bomb was so powerful that the whole tree, together with the roots, was torn out. Sinitzin showed this tree to the police. They questioned me, but I said: "I was not responsible for the fall of this tree. It may have been struck by lightning." I was arrested, however, and taken back to my village to await my sentence. Thus ended my attempt to start a revolution.

In the meantime Sinitzin went to headquarters for his reward. The police asked him:

"Who was it that took Iliodor to that house in the forest?"

"I did," he replied.

The result was that they almost beat him to death and threw him out, not giving him one cent of the reward. He then went to Petrograd, saw Rasputin, and told him all about my intentions. Rasputin told

the czar that he should imprison me in the Fortress of St. Peter and St. Paul.

And what was the end of Sinitzin? He came back to Tsaritzin and died a terrible death. He was visiting some friends who were having sturgeon for supper; and he died from ptomaine poisoning. The governor, supposing that my followers had made away with him, ordered an autopsy. The examination, which took place at Saratoff, proved that he had actually died of ptomaine poisoning.

On June 23 I received from the Novo Tcherkask court of justice a lengthy indictment accusing me of sacrilege and lese-majesty and of organizing a criminal society for terroristic acts. Immediately afterward arrangements were made to take me to Petrograd for imprisonment in the Fortress of St. Peter and St. Paul. As soon as I learned this, I determined upon two things, to attempt to bring about the assassination of Rasputin and to escape abroad.

Before starting for Petrograd, I was taken to my house in order to show the police authorities what documents I had hidden there. They also wished to ascertain from my neighbors some new facts concerning my activities. I was kept here for some time, cut off from the outside world and surrounded by police and Cossacks.

Now, in this house there was an underground passage that I had had dug, leading from one of the

rooms out into the forest, and through it I was able to communicate with my wife and my friends. Among those who came to me was a young girl named Chionia Guseva, who had been one of the members of my revolutionary organization. She was a clever, industrious, devoted girl, well read in the Holy Scriptures. In the course of a conversation about Rasputin she had once exclaimed fervently: "Dear Father, what a devil Grishka is! I 'd like to stab him. I 'd like to slay him just as the prophet Elijah, at God's command, slew four hundred and fifty of the false prophets of Baal. Rasputin is worse than they were. Just see what he does, Father! Give me your blessing to get even with him."

In order to test the firmness of her resolve, I had expostulated with her.

"Chionia," I said, "why do you talk in this way? You know it is a sin to shed human blood."

But she only insisted the more that it would be no sin to kill Rasputin.

"By his order," she said, "the archbishops, the czar, and the czarina are trampling upon all our sacred shrines. Like murderers, they have deprived us of our last spiritual consolation, they have destroyed our monastery and exiled our shepherd. Do they expect us, after all that, to follow their teachings? No; let fools obey Rasputin, but we know better. It is no sin to kill him, and I mean to do it."

I must add that Chionia had not gained her impressions of Rasputin solely through conversations

THE HOUSE AT BOLSCHOYE FROM WHICH ILIODOR MADE HIS ESCAPE

with me. She had formed an independent judgment of his baleful activities based on information that was known to all, and she belonged to a circle of women and girls, most of whom had been wronged by the saint, who had formed with my consent an organization with the object of castrating him. Rasputin had been informed of the plot, and it came to nothing. But the resolute Chionia determined to make away with Gregory even if she had to act all by herself. Her resolve had been strengthened when the Holy Synod, replying to my specific charges against Rasputin, declined to prosecute him, giving as a reason that his crimes would have to be tried by a lay court (as if the czar would have permitted this!); and she had put her last scruple aside when she read that Rasputin, informed by certain newspaper men that I was going to write a book about him, had replied:

"Let him write, if he feels like it; it 's all over with him. As for myself, I fear nothing and nobody."

So now, when Chionia came to me to ask my blessing, I joined my will with hers. A few hours before, I had had news that Rasputin, on the very day of the assassination of the Archduke Francis Ferdinand, had blessed the czar and predicted a victorious war. I said to Chionia:

"You must follow Rasputin, no matter where he may go, and kill him."

"I shall be happy, Father, to do everything that you wish me to do," she replied.

Then I opened her shirt-waist and hung around her neck a little chain carrying a knife, saying as I did so, "With this knife kill Grishka."

Chionia immediately set off for Jalta, where Rasputin happened to be at the time, and the rest of her story I heard only after I had left Russia. When she reached Jalta, she found that Gregory had gone to Petrograd. She followed him there, only to be told that he had changed his plans and gone to his birthplace Poksrovskoye, in Siberia, a nine-days' journey away. This was not true. He was still in Petrograd, and did not leave for another ten days. Chionia, however, went to Poksrovskoye and, not finding him there, decided to wait for him. At about the moment of her arrival Rasputin actually started on the journey, which was in some sense a triumphal one for him; for at Perm he was received with solemn ceremony by Bishop Palladius in the state apartment of the railway station.

Just as Gregory arrived at Poksrovskoye, Chionia stepped forward and stabbed him. She was arrested, and Rasputin was taken to the hospital. All sorts of solicitous messages poured in upon him, many of which are recorded in Lochtina's diaries. The czar and czarina telegraphed, "We are zealously praying to God for you." Archbishop Piterim, whom the saint had made Exarch of Georgia, wired, "May your recovery serve as a spiritual convalescence for those who intend to spread Christianity with fire and sword." Rasputin himself wired from the hospital

to his friends in Petrograd, "A carrion stabbed me with a knife, but with God's help I have remained alive."

As a matter of fact, the wound was not serious. On August 20 he left the hospital and returned to Petrograd, where, according to information imparted to me by a noted Russian author, he was received with great pomp, first, as "an innocent sufferer" and, secondly, as "a prophet whose prophecies come true."

For the attempt at murder, I may add, Chionia was at first confined in a solitary cell in the Tumen prison for one year. She was refused a trial. Rasputin did not care to give her an opportunity to justify herself. Instead, he had her examined by physicians, who, on June 20, 1915, pronounced her insane and consigned her to the lunatic asylum at Tomsk. When the revolution broke out, I wrote at once to my old friend Alexander Prugavin, the veteran socialist writer, to leave no stone unturned in his efforts to have the poor girl released. In June, 1917, I learned that Chionia had just returned to Tsaritzin, where all the people hailed her as a martyr. She, although sane, had been thrown into quarters where only those who were violently insane were confined, and during her cross-examination she had been hung up by the hair on an iron hook, and the soles of her feet had been beaten with stout oak rods. She had, however, steadfastly denied that I had had any connection with her attempt to kill Rasputin.

But to return to my story. Through the under-

ground passage from my house Chionia had gone forth to assassinate the saint. Through the same passage I made my own escape. My wife had brought me all the necessary accessories for disguising myself as a woman, and in this costume I dressed myself and, making my way out during the night, reached a carriage that was waiting for me in the forest and took me to the steamboat pier. I learned later that the following morning the police called at my house to inform me that henceforth my guard was to be increased and that I was to be deprived of the few liberties I had previously enjoyed.

While the authorities were sending messages throughout all Russia that I had escaped, I, in my woman's disguise and accompanied by my sister, was sailing on the quiet waters of the River Don, headed for Rostoff. The steamer was overcrowded, and I was unable to get either a first- or a second-class ticket, but I succeeded in securing a small space in the women's cabin. The captain protested that there was no room, but I insisted in a high falsetto voice that I was a sick woman and entitled to at least more or less comfortable quarters. My sister remonstrated with him very energetically, begging him to have a little consideration for her old, sick mother. All the women were conducting themselves with the accustomed freedom of the women's quarters, and I was in great terror lest my disguise should be discovered. However, all went well, and I reached my destination in safety. My friends at Rostoff con-

sisted for the most part of men of letters and newspaper men, who took a deep interest in my new faith and supplied me with comfortable quarters, an outfit of new clothes, and everything that was necessary for my long and adventurous journey.

From Rostoff I proceeded to Petrograd, where I immediately called upon my good friend, Alexander Prugavin. Realizing that my presence in Petrograd would be dangerous, he immediately went with me to Finland, and handed me over to the well-known Maxim Gorky. I must say that Gorky took a warm, brotherly interest in me. We had a conversation that lasted until daybreak. He suggested that I should go at once to Genoa, promising that he would ask his lawyer in Paris to meet me in Genoa, and also that he would communicate with his editor in Berlin, so that the latter could start negotiations with me for my intended denunciation of the life of Rasputin and the Russian court. This was in July, 1914; about a month prior to the outbreak of the European War. When he found that my entire wealth consisted of the paltry sum of fifty-six rubles, Gorky provided me with the necessary funds for my journey, and also reiterated that, should I find myself in a financial predicament abroad, I should not fail to command him. Besides, he supplied me with a man to act as my guide through Finland and to help me in crossing the Swedish border.

On July 19 we crossed the frontier on foot, walking over the old bed of the River Torneå, near the city

of Torneå, four kilometers above the custom-house and virtually in sight of the border patrol. The crossing was extremely painful from the fact that the bottom of the river was covered with sharp little stones. My guide, like an antelope, jumped from one stone to another, and I tried to follow his lead. It certainly would have been a comical sight to an onlooker, inasmuch as we had taken a few glasses of cognac to stimulate our courage. Stepping from stone to stone, I lost one of my overshoes. Then I took off the other, and hurled it toward the Russian bank, exclaiming, "I shake off the dust of my feet and the dust of the country where I was tortured and mocked." Having safely crossed to the Swedish side, I addressed Russia as follows: "Farewell, dear fatherland! Farewell, God-accursed country! Farewell, great, long-suffering, good-natured people pining away under the yoke of tyrants and scoundrel priests. A grave trial awaits thee, but lose not courage. Thy blood will be the sacrifice of Providence directing everything to one end—that thou overthrowest from thy shoulders the fetters and chains of thy cruel enslavers and tormenters!"

Unhappily, having gained the shore, I found that my shoes had been badly cut by the sharp stones. This was the cause of much unpleasantness on my arrival upon Swedish soil. At the little hotel in the town called Karungi the waitresses were much perplexed by the incongruity in my appearance, for while

my shoes were in tatters, I was wearing a handsome diamond ring that a friend had given me as a talisman.

At Karungi my guide left me, and I then began to realize how precarious my position was. I knew neither the language nor the customs of the country; but my spirits were high, for I knew that I was now beyond the reach of the tyranny of the Romanoffs and their upholders. At the station in Karungi I had great difficulty in explaining to the officials that I was bound for England and that I wanted to know the cheapest and quickest way. I understood from them that the shortest route was *via* Trontheim. Just at that moment England's part in the war was uncertain, and the Swedish Government was of the opinion that England would remain neutral. I learned this later, and I learned also from unimpeachable sources that it was the intention of the Swedish Government to join Germany in her attack upon Russia; for this purpose she was shifting her troops toward the Finnish borders. I myself saw a countless number of military railway-cars, filled with soldiers, guns, ammunition, and horses, traveling in that direction. The Swedish authorities took me for a spy, and on my way to Trontheim I was arrested and subsequently discharged six times. I learned afterward that on every occasion the Swedish press announced the capture of an important spy, and a day later withdrew the charge. In Austrozondt I

was placed in a prison occupied by police dogs, and it was only after many similar occurrences that I at last safely reached Trontheim.

From the station I took the first automobile bearing the inscription of a hotel, only to discover that it belonged to the most exclusive and aristocratic house in the town, the Britannia. I realized that my attire was not in harmony with such an establishment, but I thought I would take my chances. As I arrived, the porter, in his gold-embroidered uniform, was writing something on a blackboard. All that I knew of the Norwegian language was the word "verelse," meaning "room," so I immediately used my extensive knowledge by looking the porter straight in the face and shouting "verelse, verelse."

Without saying a word, but scrutinizing my worn shoes very sharply, he called a bell-boy and pointed upward. The boy seized me by the arm and put me on the elevator, and up we went, higher and higher, until I thought my head would eventually strike heaven. The room was of a match-box size, and when I closed the door I sat on the bed and simply meditated on the condition of my shoes. Then a storm began to ravage my soul. I said to myself: here I have come abroad to reveal to the world the tyranny of the Romanoffs, and the people pay more attention to my worn shoes than to anything else. Upon this little incident I immediately founded my conception of the life and spirit of foreigners, whom I had never met before. My thoughts led me to a rather nega-

ILIODOR, IMMEDIATELY AFTER HIS UNFROCKING

He had been accused of attempting to curry favor with the people by cultivating a physical resemblance to Christ. He had this picture taken in order to show, by contrast, how preposterous the accusation was

tive conclusion, but I decided just the same to purchase a new pair of shoes at the earliest opportunity.

Upon investigation, I found that the steamers were not running between Trontheim and English ports, so I decided to proceed to Christiania, which accordingly, from August 5, 1914, became my headquarters for nearly two years. Meanwhile my money had dwindled so that on my arrival in Christiania I had in my pocket only eight Norwegian kroner (about two dollars) and a hundred rubles in paper money. Owing to the panic of the war, no one would change Russian paper money, and for three days I was virtually starving. I went to the baker and offered my hundred rubles for a piece of bread, but my petition was refused, and I did not call upon the police authorities because I had been told that the laws in Christiania in regard to stranded strangers were very severe, and that in virtually all cases the refugee was sent back to his own country. On the fourth day of misery, I passed the Russian consulate, and the instinct of self-preservation spoke so loudly that I was almost at the point of seeing the consul and appealing to his humanity. My desperate situation must have been very apparent from my countenance, for I was accosted by a man who proved to be a Jew from Munich and who asked me what was the matter. I explained my situation to him, and he proved to be the good Samaritan, for he changed twenty-five rubles out of my hundred into kroner.

Some days later I learned from Russian news-

papers sold in Christiania that the police at home were virtually standing on their heads in their efforts to locate me. They arrested my wife, and tried by all ways and means to find out from her where I was. She was at that time in Tsaritzin, having given birth to a boy. Although she was still in bed, she was taken from the hospital and brought to police headquarters and cross-examined. This went on from day to day, until finally she fled one night over the steppes to the Don, where she found a harbor among the shepherds. Three months later she joined me in Christiania.

PART IV

ALL'S WELL THAT ENDS WELL

CHAPTER I

MY LIFE IN CHRISTIANIA

QUIETLY and peacefully, far from the scenes of turmoil, my days passed in Christiania. After the crushing blow dealt me by Rasputin and the czar, I felt grateful to Providence for having given me this peaceful harbor.

The first days I spent in correspondence with my spiritual children whom I had left behind me in Tsaritzin. Knowing that all my letters to Russia would be opened by the censor, I decided to smuggle them through. This I did in the following manner. I took heavy cardboard and between two pieces I would put my letter. Then I would take a book, and have the whole thing bound together. As I sent from Norway only the most harmless children's stories, I thus succeeded in writing to Russia on the most delicate matters. In order to acquaint my people with the real contents of these "books," I telegraphed them:

"In case of death, I leave you my four houses in Tsaritzin; but have the four corners of these houses repaired."

They did not understand at first, and asked:

"What kind of houses?"

"You already have these four houses. Repair the corners, and they will be all right," I replied.

The books were so made that by cutting through the corners the contents would be disclosed. In this way I sent at least 120 books; but a Jew who was my interpreter with the bookbinder went to the Russian consul and denounced me. In consequence of this the Russian authorities confiscated all books which were sent from Norway into Russia. After that I was no longer able to communicate directly with my spiritual children.

At the end of 1914, Vladimir Burtzeff, the famous writer and revolutionist, came to Norway from England. He called upon me and begged me to write my revelations in denunciation of Rasputin and the Russian court as soon as possible. So I began to write the book. On March 15 I completed it. I communicated with my friend Prugavin, asking if he could not find some one in Russia who would take up its publication. He asked me to send him one copy of my manuscript. For this purpose I succeeded in communicating with some of my faithful followers in Tsaritzin, and they procured some paper like the lining of my trunk. I spread the pages of my manuscript all over the bottom of the trunk, pasted the new paper over them, and sent it off. On the Finnish border the trunk underwent a very severe search, but, fortunately, the secrets it contained were not discovered. A few days later I received a telegram from Prugavin, "Mother dear has safely ar-

rived." Owing to this, my book containing the revelations of Rasputin saw the light during the first days of the Russian revolution.

I also cherished the hope that I should be able to publish my revelations abroad. With this object in view, I wrote to Prince Kropotkin in England, to the famous writer and journalist Alexander Amfiteatrov in Rome, and to the "Social Democrat" of Switzerland. The last made no reply, Kropotkin answered, through his friend Mr. Teploff, negatively; Amfiteatrov answered: "Come to Rome. I shall be delighted to talk with you about the matter." Then I endeavored to send sheets of my manuscript to the Russian prisoners in Austria and Germany. I attached great importance to my manuscript, thinking that it might bring about the downfall of the Romanoffs. To have it published in Russia was out of the question just then, and I failed in my efforts to reach the Russian prisoners in Austria and Germany. I was told that it was impossible to have the book published in those countries because of their imperialistic government.

The end of the year 1915 was approaching. I was depressed and homesick through inactivity. My hope for my life after the war was to till the soil and earn my bread with my own hands. With this end in view I decided to enter a factory in Christiania in order to test my physical endurance. I cast my manuscript into the waste-basket of forgetfulness, went to the Norsk Motor Dinamo Fabrik and offered

my services as an unskilled laborer. The chief engineer asked me whether I had had experience with any special class of work. I told him I could do only such work as in Russia we call "Take, lift, and put it away." They sent me to a foreman with instructions for him to employ me in any capacity. For thirty-eight *öre* (the equivalent of eleven cents) I had to sweep the floor and do all kinds of cleaning. I tried to perform my work faithfully, and the second day my wages were increased, and a German foreman engaged me to grind screw-points on a machine. I was delighted. The atmosphere of hard work in the factory and the noise of the machinery tended to uplift my spirit. For my good conduct, sobriety, and satisfactory work I was made second assistant to the chief painter of the shop. It is needless to say that no one knew my real name or who I was. I was known by the name of Perfilieff.

I believe that I might have remained for some time at this factory, but the Russian Government suddenly decided that they could use me in a way to serve their interests. At that time Rasputin was supreme in Russia. At the beginning of 1916 he was already working on a scheme to conclude a separate peace with Germany. Now, at the head of the ministry of the interior was my good friend Alexis Nicholaïevich Chvostzoff. In 1911 he had been lieutenant-governor of the province of Novrogod, and in that year, during the pilgrimage that I undertook with my people on the Volga, he had received me

in the most friendly manner and given a dinner to three thousand of my followers. When he learned that Rasputin was using his power to bring about a separate peace, he sent for one of his assistants, Boris Rjevsky by name, and said to him: "We cannot afford any longer to have Rasputin guiding the destinies of Russia. Try to kill him, but in such a way that no trace is left." Rjevsky thought and thought over the mission which he had to fulfil. Finally he called again on his chief and said, "The only man in Russia who could find faithful people to kill Rasputin is Iliodor." Chvostzoff then gave Rjevsky five thousand rubles for his trip to Norway in order to organize the plot, and urged him to bring it to a successful conclusion even if it it cost a million.

On January 25, 1916, Rjevsky arrived in Christiania and immediately called upon me. I remembered having seen him once before in Russia. When I was in prison the lieutenant-governor had sent him to me to find out what were the causes of my quarrel with the czar. He was permitted to see me in prison in the disguise of a pilgrim. He came to me wearing a long gray beard and carrying a knapsack on his back. Nevertheless, when he called upon me in Christiania I recognized him at once. It was eight o'clock in the evening when he arrived, and he told me that he was stopping at the Hotel Scandinavia under the assumed name of Artemieff.

Just before this I had been advised by my friend Prugavin that a countryman of ours was about to

arrive in Christiania to discuss with me the publication of my manuscript. From my conversation with Rjevsky I at once came to the conclusion that he was not the countryman of whose arrival I had been advised. Rjevsky, however, informed me that he had come on a very important mission.

"I have come, Father Iliodor, from Alexis Nicholaïevich Chvostzoff," he said, "to ask you a favor."

"That is funny," I replied. "What have I in common with the minister of the interior?"

"He is well disposed toward you, and I think you believe him to be a good man. He is so energetic; he went to Moscow and immediately established order in the railroad system."

"Yes, that may be so. But remember he is a Russian minister and I am a Russian political refugee. You see, we are quantities that do not harmonize and cannot coalesce."

At this point my wife joined in our conversation. She asked Rjevsky to leave the house, and at the same time begged me not to have anything to do with emissaries from the minister of the interior. Rjevsky emphatically declared that he had not called upon me with any evil purpose in mind and begged me to give him an opportunity to finish his story. We continued our conversation.

"Have you a passport?" I asked.

"Yes, here it is, with my portrait." Rjevsky was dressed like a genuine dandy, after the latest fashion. He wore an expensive fur coat, cut in a

very peculiar style. His cutaway was of the finest material. His necktie was adorned with a large diamond pin, and his fingers were covered with rings. In his nervousness he kept pulling from his pocket a gold cigarette case studded with diamonds. I thought he must be passing through a rather prosperous period of his life. I said:

"The Government is very strict in issuing foreign passports. It is necessary that this passport should be accompanied with the photograph of the bearer." In the passport I read the following, "Boris Michael Rjevsky, permanently discharged from military service, is commissioned to England for the Red Cross."

Rjevsky calmed me.

"You see, I purposely asked for such a passport in order to divert suspicion as to the real object of my trip abroad. My colleagues were very curious to know all about my trip. They asked me, 'Are you not going to England in connection with the affair of the foreign political emigrants?' I quieted them by using the Red Cross as a shield."

"Well, what are you doing, anyhow?" I asked. "What is your position?"

"Let me tell you. I am the right hand of Chvostzoff the minister of the interior."

"Have you any letters of identification to that effect?"

"Yes, I have, and I will show them to you," he replied.

He took out of his pocket a sheet of paper folded

into a square, and handed it to me. I read, "The representative of the Red Cross, Boris M. Rjevsky, is placed at the disposal of the minister of the interior." I came to the conclusion that I had to do with no one else than a Russian government detective.

"My God," I said, "what do you need me for?"

"Oh, you can accomplish a great deed."

"Don't be foolish! What great deed can be accomplished by a humble man working in a factory?"

"Oh, if you only knew of the deed! We will both be spoken of in history. You are a historical personage. As for myself, Providence has only now given me my first chance."

"It is very easy to be mentioned in history. There is not much glory in that."

"What do you mean? Do you mean to say that it is a trifle to become a historical personage?"

Rjevsky's face was shining, and his eyes were burning with a sincere joy. He opened his mouth wide, and as several of his teeth were lacking, the expression of his face was rather tragic-comic.

"With what do you wish to glorify yourself? What do you want me to do?" I asked.

"Father, I have come to ask you in the name of Chvostzoff to kill Grishka."

"What Grishka?"

"Rasputin! Rasputin!"

"What is the matter with you? Are you crazy? How can I do that?"

"I don't mean that you have to do it with your own hands, but with the hands of your faithful followers."

"But that is a crime. It is contrary to my religious convictions. And, besides, where are my followers? They are far from me. I am separated from them by two thousand miles. Furthermore, I cannot make assassins of them."

Rjevsky was beginning to get very excited and was losing his head. I could see that he was pleading in the name of Chvostzoff and that he was absolutely sincere. He continued:

"I know you have the people who would do it, and you can get in touch with them. No one but you can find faithful men. Take, for example, the girl Guseva."

I jumped from my chair and shouted:

"Not a word about Guseva!"

Rjevsky in a trembling, supplicating voice said:

"Father! Father!"

"I am not a father to you."

"I beg your pardon. I was thinking of old days. Don't be angry! Listen. Give me a chance to tell you everything. All I meant about Guseva is that she was one of your followers and that she acted well. In stabbing Rasputin she wounded him seriously; but, unfortunately, the scoundrel survived."

"You see what a constitution that devil has! But let him live. He no longer concerns me, and I am trying to forget him."

"But would you not like to come back to Russia?"

"Yes, very much."

"You can not go back as long as Rasputin lives. As long as he is living you can never see Russia—never!"

"I know that perfectly well, but I expect to go back to Russia not through the body of Rasputin, but through the pardon which will be granted to me sooner or later. I do not believe that the blood of a million of my brothers would enable me and other martyrs to return to Russia."

"Yes, you will be pardoned; but Rasputin has to be killed just the same. That is your mission."

"I really think it is very strange that you should come all this distance to ask me to accomplish such a mission. Do you mean to say that Chvostzoff has no faithful people at home? Do you mean to say that he has not plenty of detectives?"

"Father, they are all Judases and cannot be trusted. I spent hours and hours discussing this business with Chvostzoff, and we came to the final conclusion that we have no one except you. You alone have faithful, devoted servants who in your name would go where the sun never sets and never rises."

"That is true, but I do not feel within me the right to send them where the sun never sets and never rises. That is where you are mistaken. You are wrong in looking upon me as an agent to provide assassins for men whom you wish to get rid of. I

repeat again that these men are far from me now."

"Please do not worry about that. Everything can be arranged to have them near you, and that is a part of the mission intrusted to me by Chvostzoff. I can issue false passports to your followers and they can come to you and you can tell them what to do."

"I cannot consent to this. Besides, it is not in my interests to see Rasputin dead. I have written a book about him and I want to see it read while he is alive. I expect to have this book published in America."

"I have heard of it. We know that the manuscript is in possession of some one in Petrograd. You know the correspondent of a certain newspaper in Russia has boasted that he had the manuscript in his possession. The next day we made a search of his apartment, but the manuscript could not be found."

"The manuscript is in Petrograd, but I do not think you will ever find it. The time will come when it will be read by every Russian. Now will you please answer this question. Why do you want to kill Rasputin?"

"My God! he is ruining Russia. He has sold himself to the Jewish bankers, and for bribes gives them large military orders. He interferes with Chvostzoff, who is trying to fight the German party. No minister can exist if he does not want him. He throws him out of office and puts his own men in. In all institutions, governmental and religious, he dis-

poses of men like pawns on a chessboard. Recently he appointed Piterim as metropolitan, a man without any intelligence and of the most immoral record. A few days ago he dismissed the high procurator of the Holy Synod, Samarin, because the latter tried to paralyze Rasputin's efforts to mix in the religious affairs of the country. Just before my departure abroad he insisted upon Chvostzoff placing one of his sweethearts in the military censorship. And have you heard nothing about General Djunkovsky and Count Orloff?"

"No, nothing."

"Well, that is a very interesting affair. You see Djunkovsky, being assistant to the minister of the interior, gathered compromising data on the conduct of Rasputin and asked Count Fredericks, minister of the imperial household, to transmit this material to the czar. Count Fredericks, who is a friend of Rasputin, refused to do so. Then Djunkovsky went to see Count Orloff, who was considered the closest friend of the czar. Count Orloff consented, gave the czar the accusations, and the result was that both he and Djunkovsky were sent to the winds."

"Drown Rasputin, so that not even the bubbles appear. That is absolutely imperative. You would not believe it, but Grishka is drinking heavily now. He gathers together a chorus of Gipsies and gives them big sums of money, and once, when they were all intoxicated, he said to them: 'Look See this silk

WHITE SILK SHIRT EMBROIDERED BY THE CZARINA AND GIVEN BY HER TO RASPUTIN

Presented to Iliodor by Rasputin at Pokrovskoye

shirt? It was made for me by Saschka.' That is his irreverent name for the czarina."

"Yes, all that I know. And it will all be known to the world sooner or later. Then let the living Rasputin bear the shame."

Rjevsky jumped from the chair, grasped my hand, and said: "Have you no pity for Russia?"

"Rasputin is ruining the Romanoff dynasty, and its ruin means the salvation of Russia."

"No, Rasputin is ruining Russia."

"How?"

"He and the czarina are the brains of a powerful court gang who are constantly trying to prevail upon the czar to desert the Allies and to sign a separate peace with Germany."

"Is that true? How do you know it?"

"Chvostzoff and all his court friends know about it."

"If that is the case, I am willing to have Rasputin killed."

Rjevsky fell on his knees and, lifting his hands toward heaven, shouted with a loud voice: "Father, accomplish this historic deed! Here in Christiania, in your humble abode, the fate of Russia is decided."

"Why did not Chvostzoff send me a letter in his own handwriting?"

Rjevsky answered that this was impossible.

"The friends of Grishka are listening to every word and are following every step of Chvostzoff," he said,

"and I had the hardest time to slip away from Petrograd without being observed by them."

"Very well; I will furnish you with men."

The joy of Rjevsky knew no bounds. He clapped his hands and exclaimed:

"The Lord be praised! I can bring Chvostzoff good news. My trip has not been in vain. We shall get rid of Grishka, we shall save Russia and history will not forget us. Now let us go into the details of the affair."

"Did you come here alone?"

"No; my wife is with me."

"Why have you brought your wife on such a dangerous mission?"

"Don't be afraid. My wife is as silent as the grave. What she hears no one will ever know."

"I am very happy that you have such a good wife, but it would have been much wiser if you had come alone."

Rjevsky informed me that his wife's maiden name was Maria Zazulina, and I remember he said that she had wonderful diamonds and that these jewels shielded her from any suspicion of being connected with a special mission.

"In order to accomplish our scheme we need money," said I.

"Money matters need not disturb you. Chvostzoff said that if millions were needed, they would be furnished. How much do you need? Are a hundred thousand rubles enough?"

"That is too much. We shall need about sixty thousand."

"That is a trifling sum. You will get this money. Only write on a little slip of paper the amount you need, sign it, and I will turn it over to Chvostzoff."

I wrote on a slip of paper, "60,000 are needed. Iliodor."

Then I told Rjevsky that he should divide the sixty thousand rubles between five men who would kill Rasputin and that as soon as he returned to Petrograd he would have to send me five thousand rubles for telegraphic expenses and to provide the men with funds for their trip and equipment. The money was to be given to the men after they had accomplished their work.

Rjevsky then submitted to me this plan for the assassination. He said that he would take an automobile and lure Rasputin out of his apartment and into the house of a certain aristocratic woman.

"We will go through dark deserted streets," he said. "In one of these streets your men must wait and jump into the automobile and kill him. We will then take his body, bury it in the outskirts of the city, and cover Grishka with a stone."

I told him that his scheme was bound to be a failure because Rasputin was so cautious and prudent that he would never consent to drive in an automobile with any chauffeur who was not one of his own men. I added that it was not so easy to attack a man in the

street, even a deserted street, and kill him without being observed.

Rjevsky then said:

"Well, what is your plan?"

"I have not thought it over thoroughly, but my idea would be something like this. Rasputin goes before daybreak to St. Isaac's Cathedral for prayer. He always chooses a certain dark spot for his prayers in the cathedral, and at that time virtually no one is in the church. On the eve of the day one of my followers will telephone and ask him to pray for the convalescence of his son who is ill. Everything will be done quietly, and the guard of the cathedral will find him dead in the very church that he polluted with his sacrilegious prayers."

I exacted from Rjevsky a promise not to mention any of our conversation even to his wife. But he did not keep his word. With this breach of faith he dug a deep grave for our plans.

It afterward developed that the woman was not his wife, but his mistress, and that she had another lover in Petrograd by the name of Heine, an engineer. It appears that she loved this man more than she did Rjevsky, and Rjevsky, in order to break off her other affair, had taken her to Christiania, confiding to her the purpose of his mission and the whole of our conversation. When Heine discovered that they had made off he went after them, and at Beloostrov, the border station between Russia and Finland, there ensued a fight between him and Rjev-

sky, which ended in the temporary arrest of Heine for disorderly conduct, Rjevsky proclaiming that he was on a Red Cross mission to England and in the service of the minister of the interior. On her return to Petrograd, Maria Zazulina went back to her first lover, and together they planned how they could get rid of Rjevsky. Maria Zazulina said that she could make things so hot for him that in the next few days he would find himself in a dungeon. She then revealed to Heine all the plans for the attempt to kill Rasputin. Heine was on good terms with one of Rasputin's secret detectives, Simonovich by name, and he told him everything that he had heard from Maria. Simonovich went at once to Rasputin, and the latter, learning of the plot, broke out into a terrible rage and said that he would punish every one of the conspirators. He had Rjevsky arrested and put in prison for the alleged theft of two carloads of flour, although nothing of the kind had taken place. Even Simonovich was declared to be a German spy and sent to prison.

When Rjevsky learned of the failure of the whole enterprise he begged for an interview with Rasputin. He was taken to see him in a carriage from the prison, and when Gregory received him he fell on his knees, began to weep, and told him everything. He told Rasputin that he was only a little subordinate officer to Chvostzoff, whose instructions he had followed; that the guilty ones were the minister of the interior and Iliodor. Rjevsky was banished

to Siberia, and then Chvostzoff's turn came. At this time I was still in Christiania, having no knowledge of what was happening in Petrograd. I sent a telegram to certain friends in Tsaritzin, telling them that I was dying and that they should divide my possessions among them and asking them to come to see me. At the same time I sent a telegram to Rjevsky: "Why do you not send five thousand for the expenses? Did you come to see me as a joke or with a serious intention?" And Rjevsky at this time was sitting in prison! The telegram was confiscated and sent to Chvostzoff, instructions having been given that every telegram from Christiania should be submitted first to the minister. When Chvostzoff was called by the czar and czarina and Rasputin to answer the accusation, he took this telegram with him.

"Did you want to kill Rasputin?" the czar asked.

"No, I wanted to save you," Chvostzoff replied. "I sent Rjevsky to Christiania to bribe Iliodor so that the latter would not publish a book in which he intends to denounce the life of the court."

The czar more or less believed Chvostzoff, but the blow that struck Chvostzoff came from Christiania. The clamor about Rasputin had become known in Christiania, and all the Norwegian papers were full of the rumor that a conspirator was living in the town who had organized a plot on the saint's life. Up to this time I had lived a year and a half in Christiania as behind the doors of God. No one had known anything about me. But now a whole army of news-

paper men swarmed into my house, and naturally I did not dare to show myself in the factory. Rumors were circulated from day to day that the Norwegian authorities were going to surrender me to the Russian Government. My wife was in a terrible state of mind.

"Did I not tell you not to mix with those devils?" she said. "You would not listen; you never listen to me. Now try to get out of this hole into which they have drawn you."

While I was wondering how to extricate myself from this predicament, my wife took the affair into her own hands.

"You wanted to accomplish a great historic deed," she said, "and they with their sweethearts brought failure on the whole thing. Now you have to face the responsibility. I will never allow the work of these traitors to separate you from me and our little children."

Without my knowledge she went to the telegraph station and sent a telegram to Rasputin to the effect that she had authentic news of an attempt on his life and that he should send a faithful man. She signed it "Trufanoff." On receiving this telegram Rasputin immediately renewed his attacks on Chvostzoff, with the result that the latter had to offer his resignation as minister of the interior.

My wife urged me to write a report, saying that everything connected with the plot had emanated from the people in Russia. I did this, and she sewed

the report into the cap of my little son. Then she went to Petrograd, hoping to induce the newspapers to publish the report. On the border all her possessions were searched, but no one thought to search the little boy. She reached Petrograd safely, and at once called upon Prugavin. He said that the story of the attempt on the life of Rasputin could not be published, as the czar had issued orders that nothing should be written about Rasputin. But the famous Mme. Lochtina, who had learned from one of the friends of Prugavin of the arrival of my wife in Petrograd, notified Rasputin of her presence there. The saint immediately came to the house where my wife was stopping.

"How do you do?" said he. "I am glad that you are here. You will tell me all about what happened in Christiania in connection with the plot to murder me. Do not be afraid, darling. Speak the truth; otherwise we shall never learn it. Chvostzoff is trying to shield himself. Please tell me everything, and you shall not regret it."

My wife told him that she had a written report of the whole story. Rasputin became excited, saying, "That is fine! That is fine! Let me have it!" She gave him the report, and he submitted it to the czarina. That was on March 21, 1916. On March 23, Rasputin sent for my wife, asking her to come to see him. He said:

"I have shown the report to the czarina. She has read it. We are satisfied. Now we know every-

thing; everything is clear to us. The only thing is that Iliodor was wrong in writing a book about me. But never mind that. Listen. Would your husband like to come back to Russia?"

My wife knew well enough that it was because of my book that they were all being so kind; but she said: "Of course he would like to come back."

"That is good. You understand that I will arrange everything. No one else can do it, and I will do it. It will be hard, but I will do it just the same. It will take me perhaps two months, six months at the outside. The czar is a little in doubt about me just now on account of the whole situation with Chvostzoff. Remember that I appointed Chvostzoff to the post of minister of the interior, and it was he who wanted to kill me. And once upon a time I assured the czar and czarina that they could not find a better and more honest man than Chvostzoff. I have thrown him out, but the czar feels embarrassed. He says to me, 'How can I rely on you if you appoint bandits for ministerial posts?' So you see. Tell everything to Father Iliodor; only tell him not to publish his book about me. I will pay whatever it costs. By the way, how much does he want for the book?"

"I think he wants a hundred thousand rubles."

"Oh, that 's a big sum. Would n't he be willing to sell it for less? We will send some one and try to make a bargain. But before this he must send a courier to the czarina, asking her as a favor to permit

him to return to Russia. You understand? That's how it has to be done. You must send him a telegram. Send it in my name. Say this: 'Dear, I will arrange everything. You know how they give me money and you know that I will do my best.' We must settle the question of the book in one way or another. I told him everything as to a friend, and now he writes a book! My God! that is terrible. I can never permit this book to be published."

These last words Rasputin articulated with intense nervous excitement. Walking up and down the room, he clasped his head frantically with his hands. On a silver plate on the table was a bottle of wine. He grasped the bottle, and drank two large glasses of wine, one after the other. Then he approached my wife and, slapping her on the shoulder, said, "You are a true Christian."

My wife said:

"Gregory Ephimovich, why do you use liquor?"

"Why should I not drink good wine?" he replied, and poured out a third glass. "This wine comes from the palace. Would you like to have a drop?"

"No; I do not touch wine," she said.

"How modest you are! Well, if you don't want it, all right. Tell me, did Rjevsky explain to your husband why Chvostzoff wanted to kill me?"

"Yes, because you wanted to sign a separate peace with Germany," she answered.

Rasputin was badly intoxicated, and with a laugh

like the barking of a dog he drank a fourth glass of wine. His hand was shaking, so that he spilled it all over his beard.

"Well, do you think that I am not doing a good deed in trying to stop bloodshed? I will sign a separate peace; I will sign it. The czar does not want it, but the czarina and I—we want it. We will break his will. I am negotiating directly with the kaiser. We must have peace, because if peace does not come soon the monarchy will perish. I will make an anti-proposition to England. I will tell her that we are sacrificing men in this war, and that if she wants us to go on, she must give us three billions in gold. If England refuses, we will sign a separate peace. No one in the world can keep me from doing it."

By this time Rasputin was quite drunk and shouting like an insane man. My wife became frightened. As she left, he reminded her not to forget a word of what he had told her.

On March 29, 1916, at eleven o'clock in the evening, a man called upon me who proved to be a courier of Rasputin's. Who he was neither my wife nor I know to this day. He gave me a letter from my wife and asked one in return for the czarina. I not only had the letter ready for the czarina, but one also for Rasputin. I wrote this to him because my wife informed me that Rasputin wished my letter to the czarina to go through his hands. By this courier I sent a letter to my wife, with the most insistent re-

quest that the letter with three seals be delivered personally to the czarina and the envelop without a seal to Rasputin, and to assure him that the letters were identical. I also wished her to tell Rasputin that I did this because I wanted my wife to deliver the letter to the czarina in person and at the same time tell her certain things in confidence. The courier left Christiania on March 30. Rasputin was not in Petrograd when he arrived, having gone to Poksrovskoye on a visit. On April 4 the courier delivered the letters to my wife. The same day she was asked to call at the apartment of Anna Viroubova.

My wife presented herself at the apartment, and Viroubova asked her for the letter to the czarina. Acting under instructions, she gave it to her. Viroubova was anxious to know why I had sent two letters to the czarina and whether the contents of the two letters were identical. My wife explained everything to her. Viroubova took the letter without the seal and promised that she would ask the czarina to give my wife an audience in order that she might personally present the letter bearing the three seals and also have a few confidential words with her. The same man who called upon me in Christiania also called upon my wife on April 5 and told her to be ready in the evening to go to Tsarskoe Selo to be presented to the czarina. At the appointed hour he appeared again and took her to the apartment of Viroubova. In the reception-room he said: "Sit

down, please. The czarina will be here in a few moments," and left the room. It was then five minutes of nine.

At nine-fifteen the door opened noiselessly, and a tall woman entered, wearing a light dress and hat and a very thick veil. She approached my wife, reached out her hand, and began to speak very rapidly.

"Good evening. You were anxious to see me, to give me a letter, to speak to me," she said.

Understanding that this woman was the czarina, my wife gave her the letter with the three seals. The czarina indicated a place near the table for my wife to sit, and she herself sat down near the door beside a huge clock. From a plate on the table she took a pair of scissors, gently cut the envelop, and began to read the letter. During her perusal the fifth and the sixth page fell to the floor, and my wife handed them to her. About forty minutes were consumed in reading the letter. From time to time the czarina breathed heavily, and pressed her side with her free hand, as though suffering. When she had finished, she turned to my wife and said: "Your husband has not reformed. As he was, so he is still. He has written me a terrible letter. Are you acquainted with the contents of this letter?"

"No, your Majesty. The courier brought the letter to me sealed."

"That is good. Why do you not use your influence with your husband?"

"I always tell him that truth may be good, but happiness is still better."

"It is not right, what he is doing. If he would speak only the truth—but you do not know what kind of truth he has told me in his letter. Are you acquainted with the book he is writing?"

"Yes, a little, your Majesty."

"On the strength of what documents did your husband write the book about Gregory?"

"I do not know all the details, but I can say that among the documents are letters from you to Rasputin and from Rasputin to your Majesty."

"That is terrible." With these words she looked at the clock; but it was clear that she was not so much interested in the time as endeavoring to conceal her emotion. Then she added: "Your husband has entitled the book 'The Holy Devil.' That is a strange title. Are there holy devils?"

"I do not know, your Majesty."

"No. Your husband is terrible. I will think it over, and you will soon receive an answer from me. Good night."

My wife had barely time to kiss the hand of the czarina and come back to her senses when she was gone.

The same mysterious man then reappeared and said that he would see that she safely reached Petrograd and that he would probably call upon her the next day. This he did and suggested that she go again, alone, and call upon Viroubova. My wife did

so, but the porter told her that madame was not at home and that it would be very difficult for her to see her. One of the servants, however, volunteered the information that Mme. Viroubova was at the War hospital of her majesty the czarina, and that if my wife would write a letter, he would deliver it. When she had done this, the porter instructed her to go to the hospital and wait there until he had time to deliver the letter to his mistress. A few moments later, in the reception-room of the hospital, Viroubova appeared, and, asking every one to leave the room, remained alone with my wife. She spoke very amicably to her.

"Thank God! everything will be arranged for the best. Be quiet! You can go home. Two couriers have already been sent to your husband with reference to the book and his return. Tell him that he does not need to worry. We like him just the same and believe in him. Only tell him, if he comes back to Petrograd, he must hold his tongue. If he knows anything, let him keep it to himself. The whole truth can never be spoken, and truth is not always in the right place. Give him our kindest regards."

My wife bade good-by to Viroubova. She left Russia, convinced of the sincerity of all that Rasputin and Viroubova had told her.

The letters that I had sent to the czarina, to Rasputin, and to my wife had the same general contents. I told the czarina that unless she gave Rasputin up, ruin would come upon her and the

dynasty. Then I proved that in all my actions against her and the czar I had been right. I stated my conviction that after this letter all roads to Russia would be barred to me, and I mentioned that, if destiny did not permit me to return to Russia, she would at least do well to listen to a few of my wishes which might save her.

I quote the letter here, abbreviating it to a certain extent for my American readers. It is dated Christiania, May 29, 1915.

Your Majesty:

First of all permit me to tell you that in your hands and in the hands of the czar lies the possibility of diverting Russia from a bloody revolution toward a peaceful evolution. Behind your government, silent, but bitter, the people are murmuring discontent, and before the external enemy there stands an army unfriendly to you. The people and the army have so far kept silence, but this silence is only the lull before the outbreak of the storm. You understand this yourself. You have mobilized the police, virtually doubling their salaries. The ministerial posts are filled with the most reactionary elements. A few days ago, against the interests of the military power, you substituted General Schuvaeff for the minister of war, Polyvanoff. It is strange that you are more anxious to conquer the enemy within than the enemy without. But no matter what you undertake under the advice of Rasputin, you will not be able to combat the stormy waves of the approaching revolution. These waves will destroy the dam, and then—what will happen, you yourself can guess.

Majesty, whether this bloody event will tend to a rebirth of Russia I cannot say; but its trials will be ten times as

terrible as those caused by the present great war. This is a fact beyond doubt.

My illustrious Sister, I repeat that in your hands lies the blood of the people. Do not permit this blood to be shed, for its waves will cover your head and drown you. Guide Russia through the great road of peaceful rebirth. Guide your people toward glory and power without this crucifixion. I myself have already gone through one Golgotha, one crucifixion. Majesty, will you not listen to me as to a brother, will you not listen to the few counsels which I will give you?

Cheer us from your palace, and do not trust too far this unintelligent muzhik Rasputin. You believe in him as a prophet. Majesty, he is an apocryphal prophet. He is as much a prophet as those ancient imposters who counseled the kings of Israel with predictions of their coming glory at a time when peril was already sweeping them toward destruction. Rasputin has been for me the personification of deceit, filth, and immorality. Discard him from your presence. He disgraces Russia in the eyes of all the civilized world. Send him away, no matter what secrets bind you together. The Russian people through the Duma have told you their opinion of Rasputin. Do not neglect this protest, for the eye of the people is the eye of God.

Majesty, there are moments when we have to speak even to those who do not wish to listen. Your ministers, during the sessions of the reactionaries, have declared to the whole world that the manifesto of the seventeenth of October, 1905, granting a constitution to the Russian people, was a dead issue. Such conduct on the part of your ministers is impossible and immoral. In a political sense the constitution is not a dead issue. The oak that grew from the blood of Russian martyrs has not been killed. Only the leaves of the tree have fallen; the roots are deeply imbedded in the national

life. The manifesto was given to the czar. For what do they take him, these ministers who express their love and devotion to him on every occasion? Do they really consider the czar a little boy or a marionette with which they can play? Empress, the honor of the czar is the honor of all Russia. Make the ministers cease their slander of the Russian people and the czar.

Empress, for the sake of millions of young lives buried on the battle-field, give amnesty to all political criminals imprisoned in fortresses and prisons, hidden on the forsaken Siberian plains, and scattered through foreign countries. This you should have done before the war, so that all the sons of Russia could have gone to the defense of their country. It should have been done because the political criminals are the most highly developed intellectual members of the Russian people, and in this bloody war, the success of which is based on high technic, the mental energies of the people are required. But it is better late than never. Let the soldiers on the battle-field greet their convict brothers with joy, united by the ties of love and gratitude; let them all help to organize Russia in order to make her in the future wage a victorious war, for other wars will take place in the future.

Empress, together with political liberty, give to all religious freedom. Let every one believe according to his faith. Establish a law whereby no one in Russia will have the right to protest against the religion of another, no matter how contrary this religion may be to his own belief. Take away the sword of the policeman from the representatives of the so-called Orthodox Church. Leave it to the Philistines to defend their God with their fists. Religion is a very delicate thing; even the slightest touch from the outside makes itself felt to those who struggle in the net of many unsolved problems of the human soul. Empress, grant this religious freedom, and you will free future Russian empresses from a wrong

and ugly position. You have been a Princess of Hesse-Darmstadt and professed the religion of Christ in the conception that was presented to you by the great prophet and reformer Martin Luther. You were married to the Russian czar, and you relinquished the religion of your ancestors and adopted a religion of which you had no other knowledge than by hearsay. And you know how the Russian people look upon religious renegades, particularly those who renounce their former creed for worldly purposes. All this could have been avoided if there had been freedom of religion for the czar. Such freedom does not exist, but must come. Give it to the people and to yourself and to those who in the future will occupy your position as empress.

After this, grant to the Russian people full civil rights. Eliminate the aristocratic classes and regulate all the classes by one right and one law. Give to every Russian the opportunity to assist in building up the country. Stop drawing from the aristocrats only for government positions. Draw from the ocean of the real Russian people. The aristocracy is an artificial power, already touched by decay. The czar calls it the support of the throne. That is not so. The aristocrats are the columns of the throne, but the supports are defective. It is not yet too late to change these supports; otherwise, a storm will come, the supports will give way, your throne will fall, and under it you will find a grave for yourself. Grant rights to all Russians, and do not wait until they throw themselves against you and demand these rights.

Empress, the great Russian Empire holds within it many nationalities. All these nationalities alike stand with arms in hand to fight against the external foe. Therefore be just to them all. Let them all be legitimate sons of Russia, let them all be your children, beloved by you and the czar. Let every nationality enjoy full freedom to develop itself. Let every nationality not only have its own belief, but speak its

own tongue, arrange its life according to its own customs, and govern itself. Let all the nationalities scattered through our great empire have one unity alone; let them take the oath to defend the country when it is threatened by a foreign foe. This unity would not interfere with the different nationalities, because the bayonet and the rifle are things which everywhere speak one language and profess one religion.

Empress, in the name of true Christianity grant equal rights to the unfortunate Jews. Eliminate the restricted residence lines. Give to the persecuted and hunted Jews the possibility of making their living where they find it most possible. Let the Jews, with their greater energy, serve the sluggish Russian people to the advantage of all. Empress, Empress, if you had only once cast a glance upon the shameful poverty in which the Jews have to live in Russia, your heart would have bled and you would have had pity for these poor people. But you have never seen their misery, and you are surrounded by people whose bloodthirstiness will never permit them to tell you the truth. Do not listen to their slander of the Jews. Make peace with these poor people, and make them sign a peace with you. By this you will avoid vain and sorrowful remorse.

Empress, I suppose you, like all the Russian people, believe that through prayers and mercy the lives of our dear ones in the hereafter will be bettered. You with the czar should be ready to pay tribute to those who have given their lives on the field of honor to the country. This is generally done in the form of mercy to the poor. You should do likewise. Have twenty-five billion rubles ready, five billions to buy land for the returning warriors, five billions for the widows and orphans, five billions for the crippled and wounded, five billions for the populace, who have suffered through the invasion of the enemy, and five billions for the reorganization of tortured and beaten, burned and crippled Poland.

Empress, you will be astonished, and you will say: "Are you mad, Iliodor? Where can we get such a sum of money?" Empress, I am in sound mind and senses and I know exactly of what I am speaking. When it was a question of giving land to the poor peasants, there was no money to buy the land; but when it came to fighting a war, then billions and billions were found. Procure now the money for those who have suffered in order to save for you your lands and your palaces. Look for it, have it ready, have it ready, and give it away. Give only a part of what you possess; you need not be deprived of all. Empress, if you will seriously undertake this work, you will find a source that will yield twenty-five billions. If you cannot find it, I will help you. I will show you how easy it is to find. First of all, I will go to the imperial family. You have recently built a palace with crystal walls and ceilings. This palace cost five millions. Your fortune permits you to build hundreds of such palaces. Your Government will be forced to raise a loan of many billions. The first contribution should be made by you, the czar, and your whole family. Do it openly. Make it generously. Have it told in every city, in every village, in every nook and corner, and, believe me, Empress, all your subjects will admire you and will be inspired with such enthusiasm that they will bring for the memory of their beloved patriots as much money as is needed.

Then, Empress, you and the czar and the whole imperial family, give your useless palaces for hospitals, asylums, schools, and almshouses for those who have suffered. Of the land you must give at least half to the poor, who are in great need of it. Fix a direct tax upon the incomes of the rich, at least half the interest on their capital. Certainly the rich will not like this, but they will console themselves when they see what you have given for Russian misery. From the rich go to the convents and transform them into orphan asylums. Make the young nuns servants. Trans-

form the monasteries into hospitals for crippled soldiers. Let the young monks serve the heroic defenders of the fatherland, and place the old monks, like the new nuns, in the imperial asylums. Take away all their treasured riches, their land and forests, and all the wealth that is hidden within their walls. This will amount to a couple of billions, for the Russian monasteries are colossally rich.

Empress, I give you extraordinory counsels, but I do so to remain faithful to my principles. Extraordinary circumstances require extraordinary measures and expenditures, and no one can deny that the circumstances in which we find ourselves are of a most extraordinary nature and without precedent in Russian history. These are my wishes. If you fulfil them, you will save yourself, the czar, your throne, and your house, and you will save Russia from a terrible revolution. But if you do *not* fulfil them, what was predicted in the seventeenth, eighteenth and nineteenth chapters of the Apocalypse will take place.

Empress, do not go consciously toward your own destruction. I tell you only what God has told me to tell you. Do not go against God. And do not read this letter to Rasputin. He is an evil spirit, and will fight against the will of God.

Pardon me for my rude words and the bitterness of my truth. I remain the priest of God's Church known to you, your Majesty, as

FATHER ILIODOR.

Subsequent events proved that the empress did not follow my advice. My letter was read to Rasputin immediately on his return from Poksrovskoye.

As a result, on Sunday, April 16, 1916, a man knocked at the door of my apartment in Christiania. I called out:

"Who is there?"

"I am from Russia," was the answer. "I have come from them."

"How can you call upon me without any notice?" I said through the door. "You know that after what happened with Rjevsky I cannot receive or speak to any one from Russia. If I were to decide to receive any one from Russia, I should first have to find out who he was. You may be armed."

"No, I am not armed."

"But Rjevsky had two pistols."

"I am not a man of Rjevsky's type. I come direct from them,—from Tsarskoe Selo,—and everything is all right there for you."

"What is your name?"

"Roman Ivan Petroff."

"What is your business?"

He answered that he occupied a government position.

"Are you alone?"

"No. My companion, Sergius Tchescherin, is waiting for me at the Grand Hotel."

"Who is Tchescherin?"

He replied that he was a general.

"But I am not dressed; I cannot see you now. Come in half an hour, and I will go with you to the Grand Hotel and meet your companion."

"Very well; I will come for you in an automobile."

"The man, whose face I had not seen at all, as I spoke through the closed door, left me and returned

in half an hour. I asked to see his passport. He showed it to me. It read, "The bearer is forty-six years old and is an official of the ministry of agriculture, abroad on business." On our way to the hotel he said:

"I understand that you have worked in a factory."

"Yes, I did at one time."

"Why did you leave the work?"

"I am rather an unskilled laborer. You must not forget that for twenty years I held in my hands nothing but a pen and a cross. I found that I was getting more than I could give, and I left."

"You certainly have a Christian spirit. If all the workmen followed such precepts, there would be no such thing as this damnable socialism."

"My way of thinking differs from yours. I think that if all the workmen acted as I did, they would be idiots."

"You mean to say that you are an idiot?"

"No. I left the factory because I did not know how to work. Workmen who know their business should stay in the factory and see that their superiors do not take too much advantage of them. If labor were paid justly and humanly, there would be no palaces and there would be no slums."

"Oh, I see. You say you are working in the factory still? Your hands are whiter than mine."

"Why do you ask me such questions? If you have come to verify what I wrote to the empress, all right; but leave me alone."

SERGIUS M. TRUFANOFF
(Iliodor)
New York, November, 1917

MADAME TRUFANOFF, ILIODOR'S WIFE, AND THEIR TWO CHILDREN

"Don't be nervous. We came for a different purpose. This was only apropos; so please do not mind."

The car stopped at the hotel. We stepped into the elevator and were taken to Room 345. I was greeted by a man with a long, gray beard who was introduced as Sergius Tchescherin.

"You see my beard," said he. "Don't be afraid. We are not Rjevskys. You may judge by my beard."

"Excellency," I answered, "in the olden times the brain ran into the beard, and we were told that 'the stronger the beard, the greater the mind.' But the twentieth century has changed many things. In fact, a beard rather tends to remind us now of a man's negligence. However, I hope that you are not even a relative of Rjevsky."

"Oh, far from being a relative! Our mission here is a wholly different one. Will you please step into my room and let us have a little talk?" We sat down. "You know whence we have come and by whom we have been sent?"

"I do not know, but I can guess."

"You guess right. Did you write a letter to the empress?"

"I did."

"We have come to talk with you about the contents of the letter. Would you like to return to Russia?"

"Certainly."

"Well, let us talk about what can be done just now. Remember we are speaking in the name of the empress. She has sent two of us, so that there will be a witness."

"In other words, my conversation will be before a witness, but yours without. But never mind."

"Trust us, trust the empress. Tell us, what do you expect to do on your return to Russia?"

"As long as there is no religious freedom, I wish to live where I was born, to study natural history and astronomy."

"Splendid ideas! But you will not speak and write?"

"No, I will not."

"Will you communicate with the people?"

"No, I will not."

"Splendid. You will be given a house with a library and an observatory; one hundred thousand rubles will be deposited in the bank for you. Are you satisfied?"

"But for my colony about which I spoke—will the czarina give me four hundred thousand rubles?"

"This we do not know, and we have no right to make any promises."

"Will I be hounded by the police?"

"Certainly there will be police."

"Why? Do you expect to torture me again?"

"No, they will serve as your body-guard, and also as a guarantee that you will not leave Russia again and go abroad, or some day change your mind and

have the book about Gregory Rasputin published."

"Well, it looks as if you did not trust me. Why did you come to see me?"

"We trust you, but this is the usual procedure."

"It is from procedures of this kind that I have fled. No, I will never return to them."

"Don't worry; don't worry. We will try to find a compromise. As a token of gratitude for what the empress is going to do for you, you must give her the manuscript to read. We will now tell the empress what you have said. In all probability you will be called to Haparanda. You will probably have to surrender the manuscript. You will receive money, and then you will be able to return to Russia."

"Do you mean this seriously?"

"Of course. We have not come here for a joke."

"Why does the empress want my manuscript? She knows what it deals with."

"So you do not intend to deliver the manuscript!"

"In no circumstances. Why does she want it?"

"Why, just suppose for curiosity's sake. A woman's heart is very obstinate. She has decided to have the manuscript and she must have it."

"Tell the empress that there is not money enough in the whole world to buy my manuscript. And I refuse to go to Haparanda for any kind of dealings."

"Sorry, very sorry."

"Please do not consider me a fool. Haparanda is only a step from Tornea. The Russian consul in

Haparanda and the Russian policeman in Tornea can light their cigarettes with the same match."

Luncheon was served. During luncheon they modified their demands a little, probably acting on their own initiative. Tchescherin asked:

"Tell me, what was the object of Minister Chvostzoff's asking your coöperation in the plot against the life of Rasputin?"

"I think he did it because he did not have reliable men."

"That is nonsense."

"Well, what do you think?"

"I think it was because his friend Belezky, who was in charge of the department of police, refused to do such an unlawful act. Chvostzoff is a big scoundrel. All the time he was dissipating with Rasputin; then he turned against him."

"What was the quarrel between them?" I asked.

"Chvostzoff was ambitious and wanted to be prime minister, and Rasputin pointed out how young he was. He was forty-one. And this youngster wanted to concentrate all the power in his hands!"

"Where is Chvostzoff now?"

"Rasputin forced him to leave Petrograd in twenty-four hours, and he went to his estate."

"Do you think that Rasputin will survive these various conspiracies?"

"Everything depends upon his body-guards. Do you expect there will be a revolution in Russia?"

"Surely there will be one, if the czar does not immediately grant to the people everything I have stipulated in my letter to the czarina."

Considering that I had nothing more to say or do, I then bade them good-by. They begged me not to speak with any one regarding the meeting, and to think the whole matter over thoroughly; but I told them that my mind was already made up.

"My last word," I said, "is that I shall not give up my manuscript to the czarina or go to Haparanda."

Returning home, I found that my wife had just arrived from Petrograd. She told me in great ecstasy of her achievements in Petrograd and Tsarskoe Selo.

"Calm your joy," said I. "It is not my happiness that the empress desires, but my head. I have just come from two of her emissaries. From their conversation I know what criminal designs they are engineering against me."

A few days later I decided to send the following telegram to the empress:

> I have discovered your treachery. Repentance is far from you, but the judgment of God without mercy is at hand. From Jezebel and Herodias I will save my head by taking it to America.
>
> ILIODOR.

The telegraph office in Christiania refused to accept the telegram because it was addressed to a

member of the imperial family. I then sent the message in the form of a letter addressed to Viroubova, requesting her to transmit it to Sister Alexandra Feodorovna.

CHAPTER II

I COME TO AMERICA

WHEN I decided to come to America I was not thinking so much of my head; one head more or less in the ocean of humanity does not matter greatly. I was prompted in my decision rather by the desire to see how soon the heads of those who were looking for mine would remain on their own shoulders. My voyage to America had a twofold purpose: first of all, to escape from the Empress Alexandra, on whose account my house was continually surrounded by suspicious-looking creatures; secondly, I wanted to publish in the New World the truth about Rasputin and the Russian court.

I left Christiania on June 4, 1916, on the *Kristiansfjord* and arrived in New York on June 18. Before boarding the steamer I was cautioned by some friends in Christiania that the ship would anchor in Kirkwall and that the English officials would make a most vigorous search of the belongings of the passengers. This proved not to be the case; but believing what my friends had told me, I destroyed many valuable documents.

I immediately called upon a friend who had taken part in the Ford Peace Conference and whom I had met in Christiania. As I was an absolute stranger,

knowing neither the language nor the conditions of American life, I asked him to help me to find a little apartment. New York made a colossal impression upon me. I was overcome with a sense of weakness when I witnessed its wonderful pulsating energy. The continuous lines of buildings weighed heavily upon me. What really frightened me most was the thought that I might be forced to abandon the simple, frugal life to which I was accustomed. I was, therefore, happily surprised to find that my life in the little apartment was flowing on as peacefully and quietly as though no change had ever taken place. Perhaps this was in a measure due to the fact that my life was circumscribed by an extremely narrow field of activity. I knew virtually no one, and outside the particular quarter of the city in which I lived I did not go, my publishing friends suggesting that I should live incognito until my revelations appeared. The only stranger who visited me was the editor of a magazine, "The Metropolitan," who came several times a week to assist me in the work of preparing my articles for publication. So passed June, July, and August. I believed that God had sent me to a peaceful harbor, and I was happy in this quiet life. But from the depths of this quietude the Russian Government once more emerged, and my life became filled with turmoil.

At the beginning of September "The Metropolitan" advertised the forthcoming publication of my articles. On September 9, as though in answer

to the announcement of the magazine, I received a visit from Archbishop Evdokim, accompanied by Consul-General Michael Ustinoff. My wife told me that there was an automobile waiting near the entrance, and the archbishop and the consul-general came up and asked me to accompany them.

If it had not been for the fact that I had known Archbishop Evdokim in Russia, I certainly would have refused to go; but I felt that a refusal might be an act of discourtesy toward him. I must confess that as I was leaving the house I thought that there might be some conspiracy on foot; but as I had recognized Evdokim instantly, I entered the automobile without fear. They immediately began to beg me not to publish my articles, and offered me twenty-five thousand dollars if I would withhold them.

This proposition made me lose my head for a moment, and I felt rather nervous. The consul-general attributed my nervousness to the fact that I was facing an official of the same Russian Government against which I had fought bitterly. He tried to calm me and asked me not to be nervous; but I felt very uneasy not because I had to deal with representatives of my enemies, but because I was trying to think of a way in which I might use these two people as a weapon against my enemies.

I did not doubt, and I do not doubt now, that the archbishop and the consul-general were acting in good faith. They sincerely wished that my revelations should not cause an upheaval in the Russian-Ameri-

can colony. Consequently, I accepted their proposal with the stipulation that when I received the money from them a statement should appear in the newspapers as to the cause of the non-publication of my articles. I then asked for the twenty-five thousand dollars. The consul-general said that he would have the money as soon as he had communicated with the Russian embassy in Washington.

It appears, however, that when the consul-general communicated with the ambassador, matters took a different turn. I was digging a pit for the Russian Government, and the Russian Government was digging one for me, and, unfortunately, they were more successful than I. The ambassador instructed Evdokim to give me one thousand dollars in order to blackmail me. I was invited to his office, and he gave me this amount. I refused to accept it, but he prevailed upon me, saying that I must not be nervous or suspicious. I took the one thousand dollars, fearing that my irresolution or refusal would shake their faith in me, while at the same time I believed more strongly than ever that if there was a plot, I would be able to nail them later on the shameful post of publicity. But, as I say, they proved to be far more clever than I. Immediately upon my receipt of the one thousand dollars they began by underground routes to exercise their influence upon "The Metropolitan" to prevent their publication. The articles were suppressed.

At this time I learned that the Russian embassy

had requested the British embassy to help it in punishing the monk who had recently arrived from Christiania, for attempting to blackmail the Russian Government. The British embassy commissioned a diplomatic agent to find out what kind of man I was, what was the object of my coming to America, and, if possible, other facts that would enable them to get rid of me once and for all. He called upon me, introducing himself as the representative of one of the best-known New York newspapers. I was very much interested to learn how he had discovered my address. He said, "A combination of peculiar circumstances." He had been walking near my house on one occasion, he said, saw me, recognized me, and followed me until he saw me enter the house. He said that he had seen my portraits very many times in connection with my activities in Russia and that the editor of his paper had sent him to ask for an interview.

I looked upon him as "holy manna." If any one had told me that he was an agent of the British embassy, I would have considered him a devil instead; but having severed my connection with "The Metropolitan," I needed some one to take charge of my literary work. I was very inexperienced, but I had learned enough to know that in order to live in America, just as anywhere else, one must have money. Without being too inquisitive, I was anxious to know how much he earned as a writer for his paper. I was much surprised when he told me that he

received seven hundred dollars a month. That was enough for me to open my soul to him, to be very frank with him, for I realized that I was dealing with a man of importance. Consequently I told him everything, who I was, how I had come to America, what I had in mind. I showed him all my documents; I told him everything about Rasputin and the czar. But when, among other things, I told him that Rasputin contemplated signing a separate peace with Germany, I could see a change come over his face. I at once felt that I was dealing with some one who was more than a newspaper man. But having gone so far, I saw no harm in going further. I told him frankly of my meeting with the consul-general and the archbishop, and I even showed him the one thousand dollars which I had received and asked him what I should do with it.

He was very kind to me. He said that he would arrange everything. He took me to the office of his paper. I gave my manuscript to the editor. This convinced me that he was the man I had taken him for, a serious, reliable person who would arrange matters for me. He also took me to a lawyer, and I asked the lawyer what I should do with the one thousand dollars which I had received from the consul-general. When I suggested that I should give it back, he told me that in America one usually kept money that was given to one. I then signed a contract with my new friend, appointing him my literary agent and placing myself for five years at his entire

disposal, agreeing that without his consent I would not write a word.

So much for what passed before my eyes. The unseen part of the story was as follows: The diplomatic agent went to his next superior, who proved to be the naval attaché of Great Britain, Captain Hunt, and told him that I was not a blackmailer, but a very interesting man who had told many things that would be very useful to the embassy. He told him the whole story of the possibility of Russia signing a separate peace with Germany. But Captain Hunt, having received this news, paid little attention to it. Then, it appears, the diplomatic agent communicated directly with London.

Meanwhile he kept assuring me that he was giving all my affairs the necessary attention and predicted that the facts with which I had acquainted him would soon bring about a change in the ministry in Russia. In the beginning I did not attach much importance to what he said, supposing that he spoke simply as a private person, and the more so as he always either remained silent or avoided answering directly when I asked him how this was to be accomplished. But I was soon convinced that there was some truth in what he predicted. He told me one day that he had news that Stürmer, the head of the German party and a friend of Rasputin, had been arrested. When this was confirmed, I began to attach special importance to everything he said. He stated that unless the court party gave up the idea of signing a separate

peace with Germany, Rasputin would be killed and the Romanoffs would fall. At last he divulged to me how he knew all these facts, saying that he was a diplomatic agent of the British embassy in Washington.

During the days that followed I was under great mental and nervous strain, for I was expecting to hear news of Rasputin's assassination and the downfall of the Romanoffs. Before this took place, however, the empress and Rasputin made desperate attempts to get rid of me. After the revolution was in full swing, my friend told me that at the end of October, 1916, a man had arrived from Petrograd who had been a chamberlain of the empress and a close friend of Rasputin. It was Alexander Ericovich Pistolkors, whose name is by this time familiar to readers of my narrative. Pistolkors lived in New York under an assumed name and was in some way connected with the ex-ambassador of Russia. Having learned that he was my literary agent, he called upon him on two occasions, and each time offered him one hundred and fifty thousand dollars if he would in one way or another silence me. My friend refused to listen to the proposition, even when he tried to convince him that he could have enough money to keep him for the rest of his days. I understand that until the last moment of his visit here he cherished the hope of carrying out the mission with which he was entrusted. But the assassination of Rasputin in December, 1916, was the end of his hopes. After that he immediately disappeared.

The assassination of Gregory Rasputin and the causes which brought this about were interpreted in many diverse ways in various newspapers and periodicals. The true history of this fateful event is as follows:

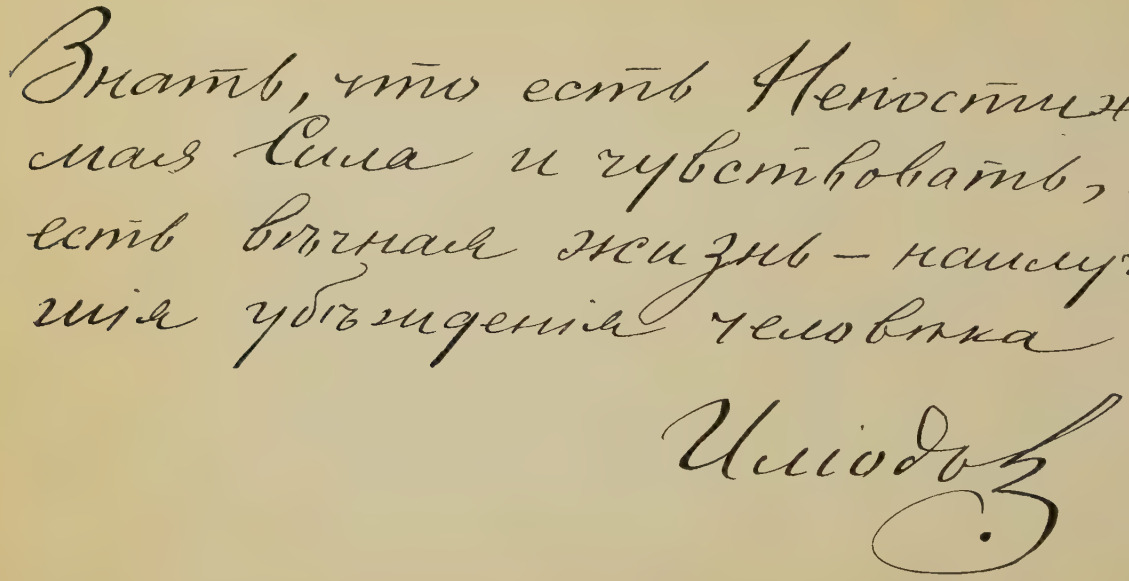
The chief organizer of the plot was Prince Felix Sumarakoff, who killed Rasputin for political and romantic reasons. Sumarakoff was a great friend of the English and a sound Russian advocate. He saw clearly that if Russia signed a separate peace with Germany, she would have dug for herself a grave preceding political death. But if he set energetically to work to prevent this, it was also because Rasputin was his personal enemy. Rasputin had on one occasion tried to compromise the Grand Duchess Irena, the wife of Prince Sumarakoff. He did this because, prior to his marriage with the Grand Duchess Irena, Maria Golovina, a relative of Grand Duke Paul Alexandrovich, was desperately in love with Felix. Maria was a girl of the purest type. She admired Rasputin very greatly, especially as her mother looked upon Rasputin as a god. Maria was my spiritual daughter. She was at that time twenty-eight years of age, but her purity of soul was such that she was virtually a child. When she discovered that Felix was infatuated with the Grand Duchess Irena, Maria came to me and asked for advice. I said to her:

"As you are religious and try to live according to the Scriptures, it will be easy for you to follow my

council and advice. Forget Felix, if he looks in this other direction. If you continue to insist on what you want, you will only meet with trouble."

Unfortunately, my council proved to be weaker than Maria's attachment for Felix. At this time Rasputin was boasting openly that he had the power to unite or separate the hearts of people. Maria heard this, and grasped at Rasputin as a drowning man grasps at a straw. She fell on her knees before him and said: "Father, you are holy, you can do everything." Rasputin assured her that this was true. "I have only one wish: I do not want to see Irena beloved by Felix," she replied. "You alone can accomplish this. See that the heart of Felix turns from Irena to me." Rasputin promised, and immediately began to take action. By all possible means he tried to foment discontent and quarrels between Felix and his betrothed, but he did not succeed. Felix married the Grand Duchess Irena. Maria was very unhappy about this, but she did not lose hope that Rasputin with his power would force Irena to divorce Prince Felix, and that he would then marry her.

When I was undergoing my imprisonment in the Floritschev Hermitage, Mme. Lochtina, the friend of the empress, was living near me, as I have already told. Maria, not ceasing to love me as her spiritual father, although I was a political outcast, wrote to me through Lochtina. The letters were full of a



AUTOGRAPH OF ILIODOR

Translation: "To know that there is a Supreme Power and to feel that there is a hereafter—these are the best convictions man can have"

deep resolution regarding her hopes for Felix; she still continued to pin all her faith on the unscrupulous Rasputin. I did not write directly to her, but through Lochtina I advised her strongly to forget Prince Felix and have nothing to do with Rasputin. Unfortunately, love is blind. Maria simply strengthened her hopes that Rasputin would finally succeed in bringing about a break between Felix and his wife. Would he have succeeded? Who knows? The shot of Prince Felix, the offended husband and patriot, put an end to all his plans. Rasputin was killed in Prince Felix's own house. The voice of fate never spoke more loudly than in his death. He perished through the weapons with which he had played for fifteen years.

The news published in the American press that Rasputin was killed by the grand dukes, who were disturbed by his influence at court, had no ground whatsoever. Rasputin commanded the Russian court and the czar and the czarina for a decade and a half, and during that time the grand dukes had ample opportunity to kill him a hundred times. They did not do so and they would never have done so because they understood very clearly that the czar and the czarina were hand and glove with the saint. Rasputin never fought against the grand dukes. On the contrary, he always endeavored to win their friendship. And as for the grand dukes and the court party, it was immaterial to them who influenced

the czar so long as this influence did not conflict with their interests. They simply did not associate openly with Rasputin, because they knew exactly what the people and what society thought of this vile adventurer.

The death of Rasputin made a terrible impression upon the czar and the czarina. During the first days they were absolutely demoralized. But the czarina is a woman of powerful will and vengeful nature. She decided that in order to glorify the memory of her prophet she should realize one of his most ardent wishes during the last days of his earthly existence, which was to sign a separate peace with Germany. It was in order to honor his memory and avenge his death that she decided at any cost to take this step. But her efforts to compel Russia to perform this disgraceful act only increased England's influence upon the democratic governing classes in Russia. The soul of this influence was Lord Milner, just as on the Russian side the soul of the Revolution was Paul Milukoff. The death of Rasputin synchronized with the climax reached by the Russian people in their discontent with the existing disorder, injustice, and tyranny, and the czarina's intention to glorify the death of the prophet by signing the separate peace with Germany filled to overflowing their cup of patience. Rasputin's death was hailed by the people with joy; it stimulated the will of the people to settle their accounts with the ruling classes of Russia.

Thus the Romanoffs fell, and thus democracy triumphed.

During the last ten years the so-called revolutionists and socialists have awakened a democratic conscience in Russia. They shattered the autocracy in the consciousness of the Russian people, and prepared them gradually to crush and spurn the gods they had served. But it cannot be asserted, despite all this preparatory work, that the downfall of the Romanoffs and the triumph of democracy are a direct result of the work of these pioneers. The guilty parties to the fall of the monarchy were those who opposed most energetically the friends of democracy. Among them were the czarina and Rasputin. They themselves cut the branch upon which they were sitting. The great service that the revolutionists rendered the cause of democracy lies in the fact that the Russian people themselves caused the downfall of the Romanoffs and Rasputin and took the government into their own hands. The power of the Romanoffs belongs now and forever to history, and the anxiety felt in different quarters that the dead monsters may rise again and come into power is vain. Many, many days of trial and sorrow await the Russian people, but they will not come from the dead monsters, but from inner disintegration.

If some one were asked to whom I would suggest placing a monument in commemoration of the revolution, I would say, "Empress Alexandra and Ras-

putin." When I was unfrocked, and photographers came to take my picture, they asked me to write an autograph on one that they brought to me a few days later. I wrote, "Truth lives forever, and woe to him who opposes it!" When I wrote these words, it was a challenge to my persecutors, who were attacking so bitterly that truth which I was defending. My words were fulfilled. Truth triumphed, and all those who opposed it are now reaping their reward. Rasputin is dead, and buried in the grave which he dug for me. Czar Nicholas is in Siberia, and on his way to banishment passed along the very route over which he and his ancestors had for centuries driven like cattle to hard labor and suffering thousands and thousands of innocent Russian martyrs.

Could any one look into my heart and read what is written there, he would see that there is no rejoicing over the misfortunes of my former powerful and now fallen friends, no rancor, no desire for vengeance; indeed, quite the contrary. When I remember the past, a sentiment of pity overtakes me for the fallen Romanoffs and particularly for Rasputin, with whom I was in the closest friendship. I have pity for the Romanoffs, but not enough to make me wish that they might return to the Russian throne. I cannot bear any ill will toward them, because I am too happy to witness the triumph of those principles for which I had to play my own last card, going counter to those on whom depended my earthly existence and

all my earthly happiness. It is my intention, as soon as conditions warrant, to return home to Russia by way of Japan. I shall make it a point of most sacred duty to pay my respects to the former czar of Russia, to have a heart-to-heart talk with him and recall days gone by.

As for the imprisonment of Czar Nicholas, there is in it one of the ironies of fate. In Tobolsk lie buried the remains of Joann Maximovich, who died two hundred years ago. The Holy Synod had never opened his tomb for the worship of the Russian people and had never acknowledged him as a saint. In 1916, in order to gain authority among the people of Tobolsk, Rasputin decided to proclaim Maximovich a saint and open his tomb. The Holy Synod protested. Rasputin replied, "What can the Synod do if I wish it?" The result was that the high procurator of the Synod had to tender his resignation, and the czar was forced to issue an edict in regard to the promotion of Maximovich to saintship and the opening of his tomb. To the petition of the Synod, in which they tried to prove to the czar the unfitness of making this man a saint and the impropriety of removing his remains to a place where the people could come for worship, the czar replied as follows: "Open the grave of Joann Maximovich. I, Nicholas II, am convinced that Joann Maximovich is defending the cause of Russia and of my family with particular fervor before God." At the very moment

when he was writing these words the Germans were capturing Warsaw. A year later he was sent to Tobolsk himself.

I am again reminded of the irony of fate. When I turned against Rasputin, I, together with Bishop Hermogenes, was banished from the capital. Later Hermogenes was sent to the monastery of Jirovitsky, in the government of Grodno. In this monastery, despite his high ecclesiastical position, he was subjected to great humiliation. He was deprived of freedom of movement or communication with his friends, was forced to follow the severe regulations prescribed by the monastery, and was in banishment right up to the time when the Germans took Grodno. When the Germans approached this place, Hermogenes, by order of the czar, was transferred to a monastery near Moscow. There this old man was kept in a damp unhealthy dungeon. He became ill and as white as snow, my friends have written me. The revolution broke out. Hermogenes was appointed Bishop of Tobolsk in place of Barnaby, the "marmot," Rasputin's friend, who is now in confinement. When the czar was brought to Tobolsk as a prisoner, he therefore, in a sense, came under the authority of the same bishop whom he had punished and persecuted for five long years. I have said that I no longer consider Hermogenes my friend. That is true. I fell out with him once and I no longer sympathize with his beliefs; but I admire him just the same. Among hundreds of Russian bishops he is, according to my

deep conviction, the only man who lives up to his high ecclesiastical duties. This man is indeed a saint. I am sure that even now he prays to God for me that I may return to the church. His gentleness of heart has no limits, and because of this gentleness of heart and his belief that the welfare of the Russian church lies in autocracy, his servants in Tobolsk have openly declared their sympathies with the imprisoned czar, whose abode is not far from the church.

With regard to the ultimate destiny of the czar, all the papers in Russia are printing the prediction of a peasant that Nicholas will end his days as a monk or a pilgrim. I feel that this is not unlikely. Knowing the mystical tendencies of the czar, I believe that he will either become a monk or, following the example of Rasputin, a pilgrim. He will do this when the education of his son Alexis is completed. Then the czarina Alexandra will leave him, and probably return to Hesse-Darmstadt.

Sic transit gloria mundi.

EPILOGUE

On the night of August 23, 1914, I had a prophetic dream. As a rule I do not like to listen to people who speak of dreams. Most of my own dreams I do not like, and I do not speak about them, for they are usually the result of an overtaxed brain. Still, I believe in prophetic dreams. They do not come to every one, but they come to natures that feel deeply. To assert that Rasputin owed his high position at court only to the tricks of a charlatan would be quite untrue. In his nature Rasputin possessed much which is as yet unknown, and with these unknown potentialities he was able to obtain ascendancy over many people. One of them was the power to receive prophetic dreams in which he foresaw the future, and these prophetic dreams of his were not of secondary importance among his occult powers. As for myself, I also have these dreams, but rarely. All the principal chapters of my life have been predicted by them in a most remarkable way, and even now, on the strength of one of these dreams, I know who is right in this war, and who is wrong, and what the end of the war will be. For four years I have been trying to publish this prophetic dream.

Every time, through circumstances independent of my will, I have failed.

On August 23, while living in Christiania, I found myself in the company of certain fellow-countrymen. We conversed for a long time about the war. My friends, who had been living for several years in Germany, maintained that she was responsible for the war and that she must be brought to her senses; for she had tried to imbue humanity with physical strength only. For my part, knowing little about Germany and the character of the Germans, and having been brought up in the realm of academic and scholastic deduction, I set to work very hotly to prove that all men are brothers, that we should love one another, and that there was no necessity for war at all. After a long and heated discussion I returned to my home, read through the editorial reports of several Russian newspapers as to the march of events, and fell into deep meditation as to the destiny of the warring nations. In this peaceful state of mind I dropped asleep.

I dreamed that I was standing on the map of Europe, near Denmark, and before my eyes stretched the land of Russia and western Europe. On the borders between Poland and Germany I saw the dried, dead trunk of a tree; it had no branches, no leaves, only long naked limbs. In one of these limbs, turned toward Russia, was a little cage of woven steel bars. The cage was about a yard and a half wide, and inside was a little nest composed of

feathers and straw. In this nest I could see the egg of a turtle. On the ground under that cage were two snakes, stretched lengthwise over the territory of Germany and Austria. The first snake was most hideous, very fat, strong, and about three yards long. The size of the head was very small in proportion to the body. It was black in color, interwoven with red, and it writhed on the ground like a spring, its flexibility showing a tremendous strength. It was too monstrous. I could not look upon it. I observed the other snake, which was light gray in color. This was about a yard long, and its skin showed a certain degree of emaciation. When it attempted to writhe like the other snake, it showed its lack of real strength. It kept trying to rise toward the cage containing the nest, but through weakness was unable to reach it.

There were other snakes much smaller than these two, but they were quiet, although it could be seen that they were endowed with a certain strength, and in their eyes gleamed malignancy and treachery. My attention was strongly drawn to the snake which was endeavoring to reach the cage. Suddenly, like lightning, the black-and-red snake crept up the trunk of the tree, put its head through the bars of the cage, seized the egg in its mouth, and threw it to the ground. The egg cracked, and the snake, descending as swiftly as it had crept up, lapped the contents of the egg.

I was frantic. I did not know what to do. I

thought, "Will not help come from somewhere to crush this terrible monster?" I cast my eyes about me, and they were arrested near Belgium. I saw there a little two-story house, half destroyed and with wooden shutters closed. I also saw the Atlantic Ocean, and on the horizon I could see some sort of object which reminded me of a light cloud. In this cloud was something that moved. I was much interested in the vision, but at this instant out of the little house emerged several people. First came a man of high stature, thin, with energetic features, very muscular, and walking with a military step. I had at that time never seen a portrait of President Wilson, but this man resembled him. Behind him was another man, smaller in size, but strong and clean-shaven, as was the first. Then came a third, a man of medium height, rather fat, with a black mustache. Then two or three others followed—small as pygmies, but with a certain dignity in their faces, and with the same object in view as the large, strong man. I had no time to observe them closely, as they immediately went in the direction where the huge snake had swallowed the egg. The first man threw out his hand to grasp the snake, but with a movement as quick as a flash, it escaped in the direction of Switzerland. I had only time to see that the snake was still powerful, although from the movement of the chest it showed signs of exhaustion. Then the hand of the strong man grasped the smaller snake and shook it so energetically that in the

twinkling of an eye it broke into pieces. One flew in the direction of Russia, and I woke up.

The next morning I went to see my friends again and said: "I renounce my assertions of yesterday, not under the influence of your arguments, but on the strength of a remarkable dream which I had last night." I begged them to write the dream down and also to make an explanatory note of my interpretation of the dream. They did so. It was then signed by three men, and two weeks later this written statement was sent to Petrograd.

My present interpretation of the dream differs a little from the interpretation which I gave originally, because there were a few details which I myself did not understand at the time; but now everything is as clear to my mind as daylight.

The Allies were, in a sense, brothers to humanity. The Germans, Austrians, and their allies were the snakes. The old tree trunk was the structure of Russia. The cage represented the circumstances which made Russia democratic. The fresh turtle egg was the young Russian republic. It was drained by Germany, for as it fell it cracked. This means that Germany is taking advantage of the movement of the Bolsheviki to split the unity of the democratic elements in Russia and seize the contents. I cannot believe that Russia has lost all her military might. I think she will recover, but not for the present. The dream signifies that she is very weak. The Allies, contrary to all German strategy, will break through

Belgium and Germany to the Eastern front, Galicia. The German military power will be divided, one part will be on the East surrounded by danger menacing from Russia, but the main forces of the German power will be in that corner through which it is advancing now, Italy. The victory of Germany over Italy is the last victory. The more she draws her soldiers to that corner, the better it will be for the Allies, because there Germany is digging her grave. Austria will be divided into parts, and one part, Galicia, will go to Russia. All the nationalities will receive full political autonomy. The most important part in the final issue will be that played by the United States. I am willing to submit myself to any torture if my dream does not prove true.

When the war is won, I shall return to Russia. After the experiences of my still brief, but eventful, life, I have come to the conclusion that there is a supreme being for whom the people have given the little word "God," and I feel that there is an immortal life for the human soul. These are the best convictions that one may have. To love one's neighbor, no matter who he may be, no matter to what nationality he may belong, whether he is white or black, is the greatest thing of all. To earn the piece of daily bread from the soil with one's own hands is the most honest work on earth. To these principles I wish to be faithful to the end of my days, and in realizing this I hope to find that true happiness which is attainable by every one on earth.

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